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MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA

a management study



W. Carl Linderman '86

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1986

THE MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA

Management Recommendations for the Enhancement of the Recreation Resource and the Reduction of Conflicts With Other Resource Uses.

ABSTRACT

This is a comprehensive study of the history, development, use, needs, and trends for the Mink Creek Recreation Area. The study provides management recommendations for the area. It also includes user surveys that may have some application in other areas of the Intermountain Region.

NOTE: This paper has been written for a graduate recreation management course at Clemson University and does not necessarily contain the views or management objectives of the Caribou National Forest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank my wife, Judy, and my son, Ehren, for putting up with not having a "Da" around as much as he should have been.

If it were not for the efforts of the Forest Supervisor, Paul Nordwall, Recreation Staff, Boyd Carpenter and District Ranger, Jerry Tower's on my behalf, I never would have been able to go to Clemson University in the first place. I would especially like to thank Jerry for allowing flexibility in my job to accomplish things like this paper, as well as other projects that may not be S.O.P.

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And last, but certainly not least, I thank Ellen Ryan, Claia Beeman and Shawna Anderson for taking my scribbles and translating them into this document.

To all you folks, muchas gracias!

Carl

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
I. Background for Developing the Mink Creek Recreation Area Paper....	1
II. Pre-History and History of the Mink Creek Recreation Area.....	4
III. Present Situation in the Mink Creek Recreation Area.....	11
A. Various Resources and Recreation	
B. Forest Land and Resource Management Plan in the MCRA	
C. Recreation Opportunity Spectrum in the MCRA	
IV. User Surveys.....	64
V. Recreation Trends.....	89
A. National	
B. State of Idaho	
C. Historic Trends in National Forest Recreation Funding	
D. MCRA	
VI. Management Recommendations for the MCRA.....	103
VII. Implementation Procedure.....	127
VIII. Appendix.....	130
A. Newspaper Articles.....	132
B. Response to the Public Concerns and Solutions.....	152
C. Application of the Clamson Recreation Management Short Course to the MCRA Study.....	162
D. A Note on "Figures".....	165
E. Use of the Project Money.....	167
F. References.....	169

I. BACKGROUND FOR DEVELOPING THE MCR.

BACKGROUND

There have been conflicts of use within the Mink Creek Recreation Area (MCRA) at least since 1973. (Appendix 1 through 3) In 1973, the controversy originated over the closure of the City of Pocatello's water system in Gibson Jack Creek, due to turbidity blamed on ORV's. In response to this concern and a Presidential "Executive Order" issued by President Nixon, the Caribou National Forest developed a Travel Plan for this area. As often is the case in such matters, there continued to be dissatisfaction with some elements of this plan. (Appendix 4)

In 1976, the City of Pocatello and the Caribou National Forest agreed to jointly develop a Watershed Plan for the management of all watershed areas which are part of the MCRA. After much input from various interest groups and public review, this plan was adopted by the Caribou National Forest on April 5, 1978. (Appendix 5)

With the beginning of the Forest Land and Resource Management Planning process in 1980, there was new concern for the management of the MCRA. There was a strong movement to make 19,000 acres of the MCRA (northern part) a wilderness. (Appendix 6 and 7) The Caribou's final Forest Land and Resource Management Plan did not, however, recommend the Mink Creek RARE II area for wilderness designation. The Idaho Natural Resources Legal Foundation appealed the "Plan" on November 12, 1985. This appeal was based on nine points. (Appendix 8)

This appeal was settled May 17, 1986. Several of the appeal points in the agreement involve the Mink Creek Recreation Area. (Appendix 8) In addition, this paper was included as a part of the appeal agreement. The appeal agreement reads in part, "The special area study begun by Carl Linderman will be completed, and public involvement will be made a part of the analysis".

The Forest Land and Resource Management Plan identified all of the National Forest north of Bannock Highway as the "Mink Creek Recreation Area Special Management Unit". The purpose of this "Special Management Unit" is to "provide coordination for the numerous special designations and activities involved which include the Pocatello Municipal Watershed and Management Plans, West Mink and Gibson Jack Research Natural Areas, various opportunities and assignments of dispersed recreation opportunity, deer, elk, grouse, and other wildlife habitat improvement projects and domestic livestock grazing improvements and use". This MCRA study was an outgrowth of this direction.

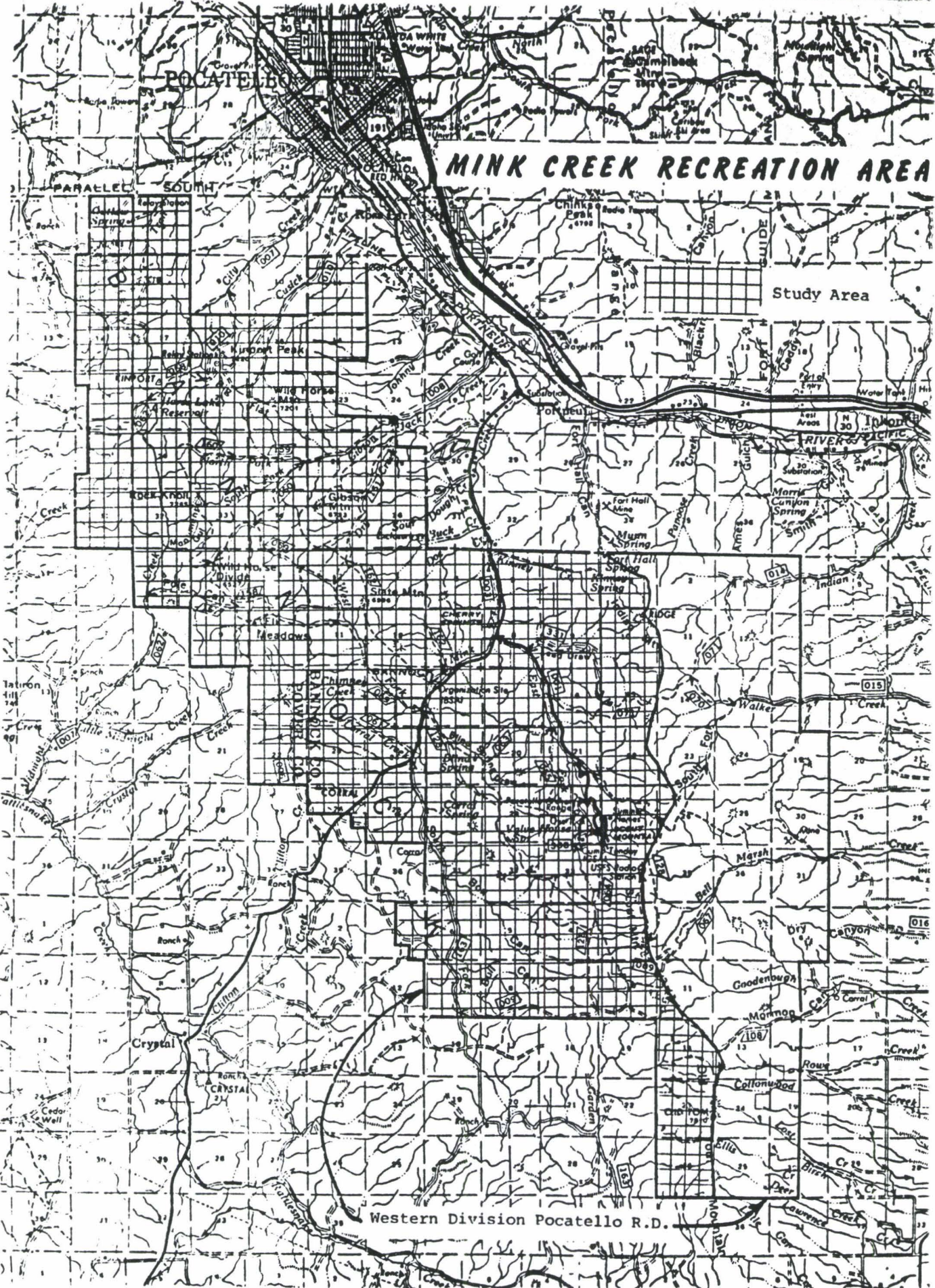
It should be noted that this study encompasses an area greater than the Special Management Area identified by the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. (See the following page.) Using the Bannock Highway as a boundary to the MCRA would be an arbitrary line. This is because the highway itself serves as the major artery for all recreation in the Mink Creek drainage. Much of the recreation activity on both sides of the highway is interdependent.

POCATELLO

MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA

Study Area

Western Division Pocatello R.D.



This means, however, that some proposals this MCRA study makes for southeast of the highway may not be able to be implemented at this time. This is because the "Plan" may have to be amended or revised.

In the summer and fall of 1986, a Forest Service Interdisciplinary Team met several days in the field reviewing each proposal made in this study. A final Forest Service action plan for this study's proposals will be developed in the winter of "86/87" when input from the Interdisciplinary Team is completed.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS PAPER

The Mink Creek area has some of the greatest diversity in activities and related pressures of anywhere in the Intermountain Region. Competing uses on a limited resource base, had reached a point where a comprehensive analysis of recreation use and management needed to be done.

After reviewing the history of the area, this paper identifies many conflicts, impacts and needs of the Mink Creek Recreation Area (MCRA). It also reviews survey's of the public's use, needs and concerns, and looks at trends. The result of this analysis, is to recommend that the majority of the MCRA be designated a Regional Recreation Area with many minor changes in management and a few significant changes in the present way of doing business.

This paper is intended to be used by the District Ranger, Forest Supervisor, Regional Forester and their Staffs. It is for this reason that it is very comprehensive, providing much of the information needed for decision making.

For the more casual reader, the author recommends reviewing this paper in the following manner:

1. (READ) - "The Background for Developing the MCRA Paper"
2. (SKIM) - "Present Situation in the MCRA" particularly "Conflicts, Impacts, and Needs" Sections
3. (READ) - "A Comparison of the 1980 and 1985 Phone Surveys"
4. (SKIM) - "1985 Mailed Survey"
5. (SKIM) - "Recreation Trends for the MCRA"
6. (SKIM) - "Management Recommendation for the MCRA" particularly "Alternatives #4, #5, and #6"
7. (READ) - "Implementation Procedure"

II. PRE - HISTORY AND HISTORY OF THE MCRA

PRE- AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA

The history of the Mink Creek Recreation Area (MCRA) and lands adjacent to the Pocatello Ranger District is important to an understanding of the situation today. This is because many of the present activities are deeply rooted in events of the past.

PREHISTORY OF THE MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA VICINITY

The earliest evidence of man's presence in this area of Southeastern Idaho has been traced to 15,000 years ago (1). There are several theories on who were some of the earliest groups of people using the MCRA vicinity, but Professor B. Robert Butler of Idaho State University has found grounds to believe all archaeological artifacts which have been found from the period of A.D. 500 to the 16th century, belong to the Fremont culture, not the Shoshone culture as previously thought (2). This Fremont culture was a horticultural society, quite unlike the Shoshone nomadic hunter culture. There is little known about this group of people. Based on information in "Occasional Papers of the Idaho Museum, No. 32", Butler determined that the Fremont culture were the earliest known inhabitants of Southeastern Idaho. Butler's hypothesis is that the Shoshone were "Plains Indians" (3) who were driven into Idaho by other Northern Plains Tribes between 1750 and 1810 as a result of western frontier settlement.

There are numerous prehistorical "sites" throughout the MCRA reflecting seasonal use of this area with none so far showing any great stratigraphic depth indicating long periods of use. Most sites probably were used seasonally for hunting and gathering purposes.

HISTORY OF THE MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA VICINITY

The movement of whites into Idaho began in 1812, as trappers explored the Portneuf River (adjacent to the study area and into which all of the Mink Creek drainage flows), Bear River and Gray's Lake area. In 1821, the Hudson Bay Company established a trading post at Fort Hall near Pocatello, Idaho. The Portneuf River and its drainages, which the MCRA is a part of, was trapped by many of the famous trappers of that era. These included Donald MacKenzie from 1818-1821, Jedediah Smith in 1824, Nathaniel Wyeth in 1832, Captain Bonneville in 1833, Osborne Russell 1832-1845, and Peter Skeene Ogden from 1825-1827. On May 6, 1826, McKay and his party, working for Ogden, returned from the Portneuf, Bear and Blackfoot Rivers to the main camp along the lower Portneuf River (adjacent to the MCRA) with 440 beaver pelts. In 1828,

Ogden reported collecting a total of 2,440 beaver in this general area. The depletion of beaver and buffalo was so evident by 1835 that Bonneville remarked upon his return to the Blackfoot River to hunt buffalo that "the country was no longer fit for white men to live in because the beaver and the buffalo were gone (4)." This trapping activity greatly reduced the local fur-bearing animal populations.

In 1843, the great migrations of whites to Oregon began. In 1847, 4,500 immigrants were recorded passing through Fort Hall on the Oregon Trail (5).

This massive influx of whites into the region put increasing pressure on the local Indian tribes. In response to the increasing number of conflicts between Indians and whites, a treaty of peace was signed at Soda Springs in 1863 with mixed bands of Bannock and Shoshone Indians. The Indians agreed to maintain peaceful relationships with whites traveling along roadways throughout the region in exchange for three thousand dollars worth of goods and provisions (6).

Apparently, promises made in the first treaty were not fulfilled. Conflicts continued to occur, including a major uprising in January of 1863 with a battle at Bear River. A company of U.S. Infantry descended upon the Indian encampment at Battle Creek, killing three to four hundred Indians (7).

Because of continual uprisings, the U.S. Government sought to remedy the situation. In 1867, the Government negotiated with the Indians, and offered them a reservation of land where they would be protected and provided with food and clothing. On June 14, 1867, President Andrew Johnson established the Fort Hall Indian Reservation by executive order (8).

At the time it was established, the Fort Hall Reservation encompassed 1,800,000 acres of land. In 1869, the Indian population numbered 1,100 individuals (9).

In 1888, the Fort Hall Indians agreed to cede the southern portion of their reservation (now the Pocatello Ranger District), and some land in the very center of the area in order to make room for the growing railroad town of Pocatello (10). This treaty was signed by Chief Pocatello for whom the City is named.

INDIAN TREATY RIGHTS ON THE POCATELLO RANGER DISTRICT INCLUDING THE MCRA

The Tribes claim off-Reservation use rights (which includes all of the Pocatello Ranger District) under Article 4 of the 1868 Fort Bridger Treaty and under Article 5 of the 1868 Agreement. In the Treaty of 1868, provisions for establishing the Fort Hall Indian Reservation were outlined. The Indians were granted rights to cut timber, graze livestock, hunt and fish. The treaty specified that the Indians "...

shall have the right to hunt on unoccupied lands of the United States so long as game may be found thereon and so long as peace subsists among whites and Indians on the borders of the hunting districts, (Treaty of October 14, 1868). Later in the Agreement of 1898 (ratified in 1900), the Fort Hall Tribe ceded 416 acres of reservation land to the government.

FIRE HISTORY

The Caribou National Forest, especially the Pocatello Ranger District, is one of the largest areas burned in the history of the Intermountain area. Many of the Douglas-fir stands in the Mink Creek drainages were destroyed by fires from the 1870's through the turn of the century. A news item in the Pocatello Tribune July 18, 1901, states, "A big timber fire is burning on the mountains east (Portneuf Division) and south of Pocatello (Pocatello Division of which the MCRA is a portion)....The fires are still burning, both up Rapid Creek and south of the canyon, and this morning it is reported that the fire is working its way up Mink Creek (13)."

In 1908, the Forest Service established a tree nursery at what is now the present site of the Bannock Guard Station on Mink Creek. It was known as the Pocatello Planting Station, and it grew thousands of Douglas-fir and pine seedlings. Throughout the next several years, these seedlings were transplanted to sites throughout the Mink Creek drainage in an effort to re-establish the forest that had been lost. In 1917 or 1918, another fire swept through the Mink Creek area, destroying most of this replanted forest. After that fire, the Forest Service closed the nursery, and there has been no attempt to replace what was once a vigorous forest.

RANGE HISTORY

The earliest recorded observations on forage in the MCRA were by Bonneville, Wyeth, and Osborne. In 1832, Bonneville referred to the Portneuf River area as "Buffalo Country" which implied that there was good forage available. There were cattle in the Portneuf Valley as early as 1863. It was not long after that until there were great numbers of cattle in this area.

Cattle were the first livestock grazed on the Caribou National Forest. The War Bonnet Cattle Company (one of the largest in the area) had their summer headquarters on Corral Creek (within the MCRA) where they built bull corrals and log cabins (14).

It was not until about 1889, that sheep were grazed in this area. The country, now the Caribou Forest, was fully stocked by sheep by 1900 and overstocked by 1905.

The first record of authorized grazing on any part of the present Caribou National Forest is contained in a December 10, 1904, news item from the Pocatello Tribune. "The Secretary of Interior has granted permission for the grazing of 500 cows on the Pocatello Forest Reserve - but stipulates that only cows belonging to residents of the City of Pocatello shall be allowed on the reservation."

The statements of old-time stockmen and many other pioneers leaves no doubt that the Caribou Forest was badly overgrazed at the time it was created. When the Caribou National Forest was created, most sheepmen resented the management efforts of the Forest Service. Mr. Woodall (an early permittee) said, in 1907, he thought that the creation of Forest Reserves would put the average sheepman out of business. "However," he added, "can you visualize what this country would look like if the Government had not taken over the supervision of the high mountains in this region (15)?"

TIMBER HISTORY

The timber within the MCRA was an important resource for the early development of Pocatello. Early settlers logged many of the accessible drainages within the MCRA, including Gibson Jack, East and West Fork of Mink Creek and many of the smaller drainages (16). Since the creation of the Pocatello Ranger District, most of the sales on the District have been small in scale and without silvicultural practices in mind (17). As a result, some of the stands were high-graded, leaving behind the poorer quality trees. It was not until 1983 that the District started to develop a long-term management program. The work on the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan stimulated this effort. None of the area north of the Mink Creek/Bannock Highway is within the Forest's timber base.

WILDLIFE HISTORY

At one time, grizzly bear, buffalo, bighorn sheep, antelope and wolves inhabited the MCRA. By the time the Pocatello Forest Reserve was created, all but the timber wolf had disappeared from the MCRA. Timber wolves existed in large enough numbers in 1908 that they were considered a significant predator to sheep, and were routinely killed (18). Today, they no longer exist on the Pocatello Ranger District.

In 1914, 24 cow elk and 3 bulls from the Jackson Hole herd were planted in the MCRA. Then, in 1915, the same numbers were again planted in the MCRA (19). This herd grew rapidly, and as recently as the early 1960's, it numbered over 1,000 animals. In the late 70's, the numbers dropped to less than 100 animals due to over-hunting and poaching. A good testimony to the quality of the elk habitat in the MCRA is that this herd's size has increased enough so that 30 permits were issued to hunt bull elk in 1984 and 1985 and 40 permits in 1986.

According to Idaho State Fish and Game Laws for the 1930's, the entire portion of the Pocatello Ranger District north and west of Mink Creek was within the "Pocatello Forest Reserve Game Preserve." At that time, the only way a game preserve could be opened to hunting was by an act passed by the Legislature. There is some indication that the Governor was given special authority to do this in the Pocatello Preserve. It is not known if the "Pocatello Forest Reserve Game Preserve" was ever officially dissolved, although it is heavily hunted at the present time.

Today, the MCRA falls within one of the heaviest hunted units in the State of Idaho (20). On opening morning of the deer season, the Pocatello Ranger District operates a public information station at Cherry Springs on the Mink Creek Road. During a two-hour period in 1984, 750 hunters went through this station, and in 1985, 725 went through it.

RECREATION HISTORY

The first recreationist on record in the Caribou National Forest area was an English Army Officer, William Stewart, who hunted all species of big game, trapped beaver, fished, and explored for pleasure. Stewart, with his large mounted party, hunted the Caribou National Forest area first in 1832, and continued to visit the region until 1845 (21).

As the lands adjacent to the MCRA became settled, recreational use of this area increased. Most of this early activity was associated with hunting, fishing, berry picking and picnic type activities. This type of dispersed use continued through the formation of the National Forest, up until the 1920's. Recreation use was limited to very few areas, due to the poor and limited number of roads.

Demands for recreation continued to increase. Sterling Justice (for whom Justice Park on Scout Mountain is named), Pocatello District Ranger, with modest funds (\$200 both in 1919 and 1920) started improving the road up the East Fork of Mink Creek (22). Off of this road several recreation areas were developed that are still in existence today. In 1920, the Boy Scouts, along with the support of several businessmen, proposed the development of a Scout Camp. Sterling Justice found a location off of this road where they developed Camp Tendoy. Today, this same camp is under permit to Camp Taylor, Inc. which is associated with Campfire of America. In 1922, a meeting was held in Pocatello to discuss the development of summer homes on Scout Mountain (23). In 1924, the first summer homes were built off of the East Mink Road, some of which survive today. Over the next few years, ten homes were constructed. There are nine homes left today as one burned in 1983. Beginning in 1933, the next recreation development in this area was done by the Civilian Conservation Corp (C.C.C.'s). This development included the campground, picnic area, amphitheater site, and White Rock Overlook site. These areas are the only developed sites still in existence off of this road. The field camp that the CCC's worked out of when they developed these sites is used today as a dispersed site and trailhead for the Crestline Trail.

In 1936, the CCC's developed Cherry Springs Campground along Mink Creek. This was a very popular recreation development for many years, but was closed by the Forest Service in 1978 due to flood problems, vandalism, and worn out facilities. (Appendix 9) An Environmental Assessment was written in 1980 that recommended that the site be developed into a nature area due to its unique and diverse plant and animal communities. In 1984, the Pocatello Ranger District initiated this development through the use of volunteers. (Appendix 10)

In 1940, the CCC's constructed the first winter sports site on the Forest in Lead Draw. They developed a lodge, rope tows and ski jump. This area proved not to be a good site for snow accumulation and it was abandoned around 1947. The road to this site is still heavily used today for hunting, dispersed camping, "keggers", and for ORV use. Lead Draw is one of the major law enforcement problems on the District.

After World War II, not unlike most of the Nation, recreational use and demands grew a great deal in the MCRA. In 1945, recreation use on the District was approximately 11,270 RVD's. In 1985, the Pocatello Ranger District received 240,395 RVD's of use.

Most of the trails in the MCRA today, were originally developed for watershed and range administration not for recreation use. Most of these were in place by the early 1940's (24). Exceptions include: Slate Mountain Trail Relocation 1982, Box Canyon Trail 1983, Blind Springs Nordic Connector Trail 1983, Porcelain Pot Nordic Trail 1983/84, Cherry Springs Nature Trails 1984, Elk Meadows Snowmobile Connector Loop 1985, Box Canyon Snowmobile Connector Loop 1985 and the Crystal Peak Nordic Ski Trail 1986.

WATERSHED HISTORY

The creation and development of the Pocatello Ranger District is directly tied to the City of Pocatello's needs for a domestic water supply. Prior to the creation of the Pocatello Forest Reserve or the Caribou National Forest, on March 3, 1891, by a special act of Congress, Pocatello was given permission to use water from the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. As a result, a highline water ditch was developed in 1892 by N. C. Hawkins. This ditch is still visible today along the main fork of Mink Creek. Congress removed this area from the Reservation on June 17, 1902. As soon as this area was opened for public use, it was overrun with sheep and cattle.

THE FORMATION OF THE POCATELLO FOREST RESERVE AND THE CARIBOU NATIONAL FOREST

The City of Pocatello petitioned the President to create a Forest Reserve, in order to protect its water supply from pollution by overuse of cattle and sheep. The Mink Creek area, was set aside by President Theodore Roosevelt on September 5, 1903, as the Pocatello Forest Reserve. This was one of the first forest reserves in what is now the Intermountain Region. The primary responsibility of the early rangers on the Pocatello Forest Reserve (later the Pocatello Ranger District) was the protection of the City's watershed.

Over the years, there have been many additions and modifications to the City's water system. Many of the physical developments have occurred in the West Fork of Mink Creek and Gibson Jack. Today, the City uses water out of the West Fork of Mink Creek and Gibson Jack, although in the past, it also used water from the South Fork of Mink Creek.

III. PRESENT SITUATION IN THE MCRA

PRESENT SITUATION IN THE MCRA

RANGE

There are two cattle allotments in the MCRA. Approximately 1,200 cattle graze on these allotments during the course of a year (June - October). There are no sheep allotments in the MCRA (25). With the exception of incidental grazing done by horses being ridden in the watershed, grazing is not permitted within the City of Pocatello Municipal Watershed and the two Research Natural Areas.

Recreation and Range Conflicts

Recreationists often complain about cattle use within the MCRA. One of the concerns expressed is their perception of overgrazing.

The following is a range analysis study done on the MCRA by an interdisciplinary Team from the Caribou National Forest in 1982. Management intensity and overall condition have continued to improve since that time. It is important to note that only part of PWI Watershed 019 falls within the MCRA.

Range Condition

<u>Watershed</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Very Poor</u>
019	13%	52%	25%	10%	0%
020	28%	49%	23%	0%	0%
021	5%	62%	23%	10%	0%

Cattle and people often are attracted to the same places. The MCRA is not an exception. Many MCRA dispersed sites such as the Ponderosa Pine Plantation, are cool and shady in the summer, and both cows and Homo sapiens enjoy these areas. People usually chase the cows out when they use the areas, but the cows rarely take yesterday's meal with them. Cattle congregate along the various streams in the MCRA, which are the same areas that fishermen and other recreationists also congregate in.

When not properly managed, cattle can overuse or impact a riparian area. There are management plans and grazing permit requirements to prevent this, although for various reasons, they are not 100% effective. Some of the reasons are: 1) some range riders do not keep track of all the wards under their keep, 2) poor salting practices by the rider, 3) recreationists disrupting the objectives of management plans by leaving gates open, cutting fences, and spooking the cattle, 4) and finally, cows don't read the plans.

Recreation and Wildlife Conflicts

Recreational use of wildlife, both consumptive and non-consumptive can be in conflict with what is best for wildlife. These can be direct or indirect impacts to wildlife.

Some examples of direct impacts to wildlife occurring within the MCRA, include the following: 1) harassment of mule deer and elk on winter ranges by snowmobiles, 2) uncontrolled domestic dogs and cats preying on big game, birds and small animals, 3) unlimited harvesting of big game by Bannock-Shoshone Tribal Members because of Treaty Rights, and 4) concentrated ORV use which displaces big game (27).

The following are some indirect impacts upon wildlife occurring within the MCRA: 1) a variety of heavy recreational use in some portions of the MCRA displaces big game animals. This is due to a lack of cover for big game animals in the South Mink and East Mink areas after the ORV gates are opened in the spring, 2) heavy recreational use of East Mink, Box Canyon, and Bull Canyon Trails forces big game to make frequent use of hiding cover areas and less desirable forage areas, 3) failure to adequately close off old roads and trails permits unauthorized ORV use of big game habitat which defeats the purpose of the ORV Travel Management Plan, and 4) lack of funding for law enforcement to administer the ORV Travel Management Plan permits the continued, uncontrolled use of areas that should be protected from ORV use.

WATERSHED

Since 1903, the primary consideration for Forest Service management (within the municipal watershed) has been the production of quality water. Restrictions on other uses have been made when it appeared that water quality was degraded (28). Twenty percent of the water used by the City of Pocatello comes from either Gibson Jack or West Mink Creek in the MCRA.

After much work by the Forest Service and the City of Pocatello, a Watershed Management Plan was approved in 1978. This was a controversial plan and still has critics today. Some aspects of the plan that are controversial and affect recreational use include: 1) closure of the watershed to overnight camping, 2) closure of the watershed to use by dogs, 3) permitted use of the area by horses, 4) closure of a popular trail from West Mink into Elk Meadows, 5) closure of the watershed to snowmachines, and 6) use of the watershed by motorcycles.

According to the Forest Hydrologist, a threat to water quality is the introduction of Giardia by horses (29). If Giardia is found to be a problem, the Forest may be required to close the watershed to horse use (30). The Management Plan directs that the Forest will abide by the State of Idaho's Water Quality Criteria. Within the MCRA, the Forest Hydrologist has identified other recreational impacts to watershed quality. These include; 1) moderate siltation of some creeks adjacent to dirt roads due to ORV use; 2) people camping adjacent to some creeks without proper human and solid waste disposal; and 3) recreationists leaving gates open or cutting fences which allows cattle into areas they should not be.

All of the aspen cutting has been done through the fuelwood program. Up until 1984, all of the harvesting was done by the public for personal firewood use. In 1984 and 1985, there were 18 acres of aspen sold to a commercial firewood cutter. Fuelwood (firewood) cutting is considered a recreational activity and is recorded in RIM as "gathering forest products". For the past several years, the Pocatello Ranger District has sold over 1,000 permits for fuelwood gathering each year.

Conflicts that occur between firewood gathering and other recreational activities include: 1) increased traffic on access roads, 2) units being harvested are not appealing for other recreational uses, and 3) noise and dust pollution adjacent to units being harvested.

SPECIAL USES

Summer Homes

The summer home area is located just below Scout Mountain Campground. Utilization by their owners of one-half of them is good while the other homes are not regularly used. Most are either in good condition or in the process of being improved, though there are a couple that are in poor condition.

Conflicts that occur between the summer home use and recreational use of the area include: 1) campers and picnickers wandering down into the summer home area, 2) people breaking into the summer homes, 3) recreationists leaving gates open and breaking fences which allow cattle to get into the summer home area, and 4) hunters shooting into or through the summer home area.

Utility Lines

Idaho Power has, under permit with the Forest Service, 6.181 miles of powerlines within the MCRA. One of these lines runs through the main Mink Creek Canyon from Pocatello to Arbon Valley. A 345 KV transmission line runs along the west side of the MCRA.

Conflicts that occur between this use and recreationist include: 1) hunters shooting insulators on the power poles or the powerlines themselves, 2) campers and picnickers cutting utility poles, and 3) people driving off-road vehicles along right-of-ways.

Telephone Transmission

AT&T has a telephone line buried along Mink Creek Road for a distance of approximately 1.3 miles (35). At that point, the line goes above-ground on up the canyon until it reaches Bannock Guard Station where it ends. The above-ground line also runs up East Mink Canyon and services several private homes.

This line experiences conflicts similar to what the utility lines do.

Electronic Sites

There are two electronic sites on Scout Mountain within the MCRA. One of these sites is owned by the USFS and maintained under a contract with a private contractor. The second development is under permit with the Forest Service and owned by a private business.

Conflicts that occur with recreation include: 1) vandalism of the amenities on the site, and 2) damage to the access road by ORV's.

Television Translator Site and Access Road

Group W Cable maintains a television satellite dish up Cusick Creek which is within the MCRA. In addition to the site (used as a backup to a new off-Forest site), there is an access road that is approximately 1.2 miles long. This road is only open to the public for hiking, horseback riding, and motorcycle use. This road was reconstructed in 1984 by Group W Cable after it suffered a great deal of damage from 4-wheel drive use. Gates were installed at each end of the road to reduce future damage to the road from 4-wheel drives. Access is still permitted by other than 4-wheel drive use.

Conflicts with recreation include the same ones that occur to the Scout Mountain Electronic Sites.

Camp Taylor Youth Camp

Camp Taylor is located on Scout Mountain, approximately 0.5 miles below the Scout Mountain Campground on the East Fork Ro. This camp is operated by Campfire of America as a non-profit youth camp. In the summer, they run regular overnight and day summer camp programs. They make their facilities available year-round for other groups or individuals on a rental basis. In 1982, arsonists broke into the main lodge and burned it down. Many of their individual cabins are in need of repair. There is a shortage of funds for this group to do a great deal of work on an annual basis.

Conflicts that occur with Camp Taylor and other recreational users include: 1) vandalism, 2) disturbance of camp activities by other recreationists, and 3) shooting of facilities and improvements by hunters.

LANDS - INHOLDINGS

Although alienated lands (lands other than those under National Forest Management) are not numerous within this watershed, those that do exist have substantial development potentials. This is due to their terrain and their proximity to Pocatello (36). Since all of these lands are anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes from downtown Pocatello, most of their owners think of them as having high development potential and therefore, values. Attempts at land exchanges over the years, have not been successful.

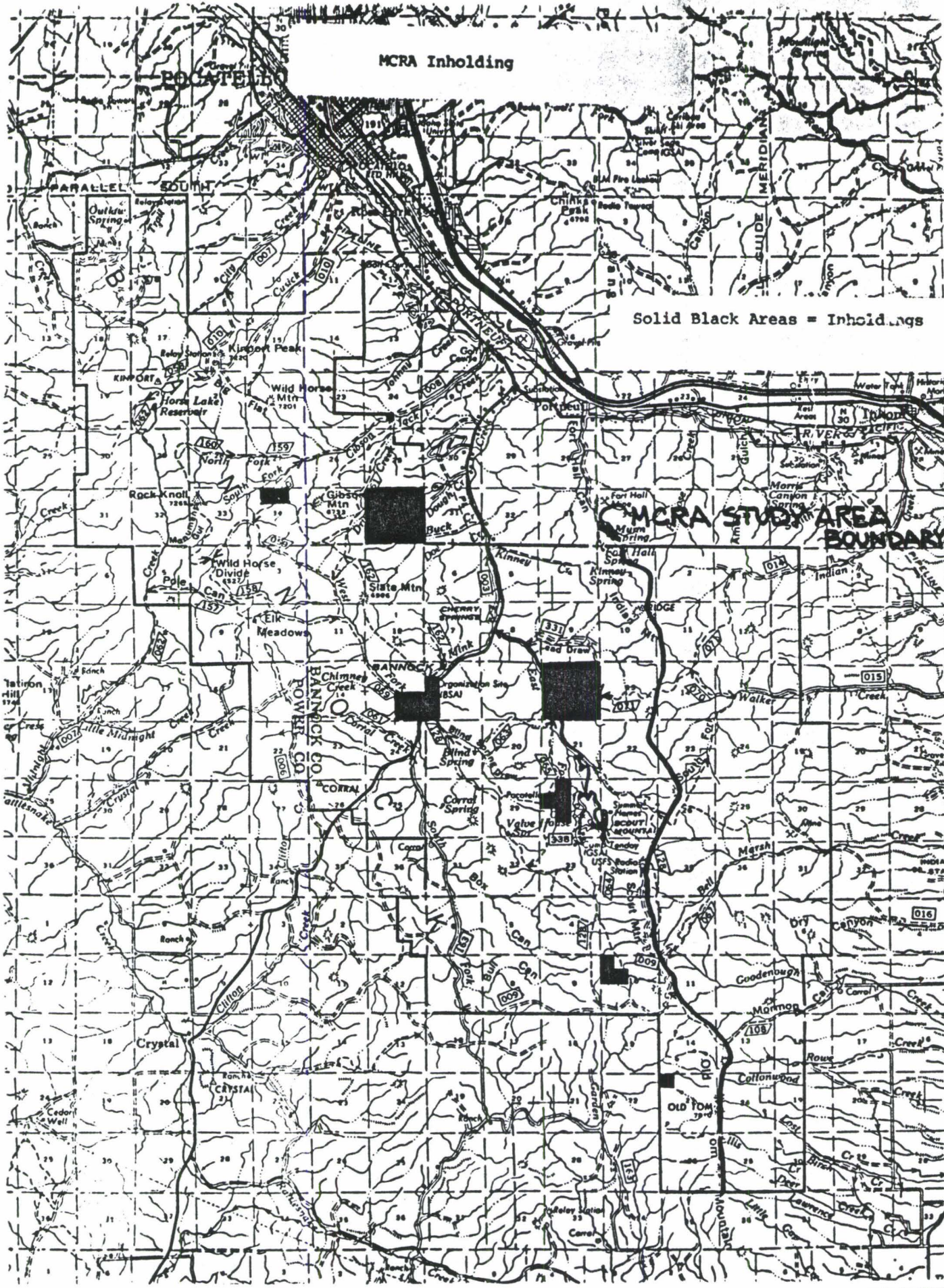
Presently, there is no conflict with recreation or National Forest management with the exception to the City property where parties sometimes get out-of-hand and bother livestock, equipment (sometimes stealing) and residents at Bannock Guard Station. All inholdings, however, have the potential to be the single greatest problem with Forest Service management in the future if any of them were to be developed.

Of these inholdings, one in the Gibson Jack watershed and another in the East Mink drainage are extremely important to acquire.

The following chart shows the various inholdings in the MCRA. The chart also indicates the priority of aquisition and present ownership.

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>AQUISITION PRIORITY</u>	<u>OWNERSHIP</u>
T. 7S., R. 34E., Section 34	1	Private
T. 8S., R. 35E., Section 16	2	State
T. 8S., R. 35E., Section 28	3	Private
T. 9S., R. 35E., Section 10	4	Private
T. 7S., R. 34E., Section 36	4	State
T. 8S., R. 34E., Section 13 R. 35E., Section 18	5	City
T. 9S., R. 35E., Section 23	6	Private

NOTE. (See the following page for a map of the inholdings.)



MCRA Inholding

Solid Black Areas = Inholdings

MCRA STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

RECREATION USE

The Mink Creek area provides one of the most diverse recreational opportunities in the Intermountain Region. Recreation use of this area has also increased at one of the highest rates in the Region over the last five years.

The following table shows the various uses and use rates within the MCRA in 1981 and 1985:

<u>Activity Name</u>	<u>1981 Use</u>	<u>1985 Use</u>	<u>% Change</u>
1. Viewing Scenery	3,900	4,050	+ 4%
2. Automobile Traveling	6,700	10,600	+37%
3. Motorcycle and Scooter Travel	9,000	7,435	-17%
4. Ice and Snow Craft Travel	6,160	8,690	+29%
5. Hiking and Walking	6,220	11,075	+44%
6. Bicycling	800	1,800	+66%
7. Horseback Riding	2,600	2,478	+26%
8. Cross-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing	2,600	13,903	+82%
9. Touring, Guided	200	400	+50%
10. Walking, Guided	300	1,100	+73%
11. Viewing Activities (spectator)	500	1,100	+54%
12. Individual Sports	1,000	900	-10%
13. Picknicking	6,000	17,555	+66%
14. Fishing, Cold Water	1,050	3,519	+96%
15. Nature Study	*	900	*
16. Camping, General Day	1,755	4,565	+62%
17. Camping, Auto	600	4,915	+88%
18. Camping, Trailer	100	3,050	+97%
19. Camping, Tent	1,395	2,735	+49%

20. Walking, Unguided	200	600	+77%
21. Games and Play	300	1,850	+94%
22. General Information	*	700	*
23. Attending Talks and Program	200	1,300	+85%
24. Viewing Interpretive Signs	250		+25%
25. Team Sports	100	200	+50%
26. Organization Camping, Gen. Day	2,000	3,700	+46%
27. Organization Camping, Night	2,000	3,000	+43%
28. Recreation Cabin Use	1,000	1,500	+33%
29. Snow Play	600	1,000	+40%
30. Sledding, Tobogganning	*	100	*
31. Hunting, Big Game	1,940	2,000	+ 3%
32. Hunting, Upland Birds	1,065	1,235	+14%
33. Nature Study, Wildlife, Fish, and Birds	570	835	+32%
34. Gathering Forest Products	<u>2,765</u>	<u>3,245</u>	<u>+15%</u>
TOTALS	63,870	122,035	+92%

*Indicates an activity for which no use figures were recorded in 1981.

Additional Information On "1985" Use Figures

In 1985, camping and picnicking use figures were based on fee collection envelopes and monitoring by the campground hosts (Appendix 12) and recreation guards. Snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, sledding, tobogganning, and snow playing use was estimated by monitoring the Park 'N' Ski lots and snowmobile parking lots approximately six days-a-week within the MCRA. Big game hunting use was based on counts from Forest Service Information stations within the MCRA. Bicycle use was based by periodically monitoring the bicycle traffic on Bannock Highway and East Fork of Mink Creek. Gathering forest product use figures were based on the fuelwood cordage sold to the public, and monitoring of the fuelwood cutting areas within the MCRA by fire guards. Walking guided, viewing interpretive signs, and nature study use figures were based on input from School District #25 teachers and bus scheduling, along with the monitoring of brochure rate use. Recreation cabin use figures were based by consulting the summer home permittees.

Organizational camping (general day), organizational camping (night), games and play, and team sports use figures were based on information provided by Camp Taylor administrators. Viewing activities (spectator) and individual sports use estimates were based on information provided by the Pocatello Field Archers. Attending talks and programs use were based on Scout Mountain Amphitheater reservation records. Auto travel figures were based on monitoring traffic at Cherry Springs during various times of the year and State of Idaho Department of Transportation traffic counts. The following activities were based on observation of trailheads and use areas by Forest Service employees and are considered not as reliable as the previous activities: Viewing scenery, motorcycle and scooter travel, hiking and walking, horseback riding, touring, walking guided, fishing (coldwater), general information, and hunting upland birds.

Individual Dispersed Recreation Activities

The following is a list of trails within the MCRA:

MCRA Trails Inventory

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Use Type/s</u>	<u>Main. Level</u>
Midnight-Kinport/Monument Gulch	11.8	1*	1
West Mink	6.6	2	3
West Fork Gibson Jack	2.0	3*	3
Corral Creek	3.0	3	3
Blind Springs	2.5	3	2
Scout Mountain Nature Trail	1.0	2	3
Cow Camp	3.0	3	2
Cresline	4.5	3*	3
Pole Canyon	1.5	4*	1
Deer Pass	2.5	4*	1
North Fork Gibson Jack	3.0	4*	1
Dry Creek	3.6	3	3
Slate Mountain	3.0	3	3
Porcelain Pot	4.8	2	2
East Mink	3.5	1	3

Cherry Springs Nature Trail	2.0	2	4
Valve House Draw	7.0	3	3
Box Canyon	2.0	1	3
Crystal Peak	2.5	2	2
TOTAL	69.8 Miles		

The following trails connect with the MCRA Trails:

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Use Type/s</u>	<u>Main. Level</u>
Bell Marsh	4.4	1	1
Bell Marsh/Walker	1.6	1*	1
Walker Creek Driveway	2.0	1	1
Indian Creek	4.0	1	2
Mormon Canyon	3.5	3	2
TOTAL	15.5 Miles		

*Indicates trails that are generally inaccessible to snowmachines, even though they are open to snowmobile use.

Use Type/s Information

1. Indicates trails open to all multiple uses under 45" in width.
2. Indicates trails open only to non-mechanized uses.
3. Indicates trails open to motorcycles and non-mechanized uses.
4. Indicates trails open to snowmachines and non-mechanized uses.
5. Indicates trails open to all multiple uses.

MAINTENANCE LEVEL INFORMATION

Trail Maintenance (Level 1) - Trails maintained for primitive experience level. Custodial care only. No tread maintenance. Drainage functional and not likely to fail. Trail sides not brushed, but tread is kept passable. Small slides may remain except for erosion potential. Structures maintained as needed. Signing may be deferred.

Trail Maintenance (Level 2) - Trails maintained for near-primitive experience level. Tread maintained for public safety. Logs or similar rustic structures may be provided at stream crossings. Drainage same as Level 1. Signing at a minimum level commensurate with the level of trail use.

Trail Maintenance (Level 3) - Trails maintained for intermediate experience level. Tread maintained for public safety and user convenience. Drainage same standards. Structures maintained to original design standards. Signing same as Level 2.

Trail Maintenance (Level 4) - Trails maintained at relatively high standards to provide for public safety and convenience. Tread relatively smooth, firm and may require stabilization. Signing at high level, all other elements same as Level 3. These trails are generally maintained for family or senior citizen use.

Trail Maintenance (Level 5) - Trails maintained for high use and experience levels, including special purposes such as VIS trails, bicycle trails, trails to major vista points, trails for the handicapped, etc. Basic care same as Level 4 but patching of paved tread may be needed annually. Trail sides maintained to meet high visual quality standards by brushing and cleanup of debris beyond the trail limits. Vistas are maintained.

In 1984, there were 11.7 miles of trails dropped from the trail system within the MCRA. They were deleted because of the District's inability to maintain them due to lack of funds. These were the least popular trails and there was no interest by the public to "adopt" them for the Forest Service.

MECHANIZED DISPERSED RECREATION ACTIVITIES

Automobile Travel - The main Mink Creek or Bannock Highway is by far the heaviest used travel route within the MCRA. This highway also provides access to the majority of the access routes within the MCRA and is the only one open year-round. There are only four roads within the MCRA that are reasonably accessed by automobiles. These include the East Mink Road which is paved and provides access to all of the recreation improvements on Scout Mountain, the South Fork of Mink Creek (gravel), Lead Draw (gravel), and Box Canyon Road (unimproved) when weather permits.

Conflicts - These include Cattle on roads; snowmobiles crossing, running or unloading on the road; nordic skiers parking on the road; and horses and bicyclists using the roads. In recent years with the increased popularity of road racing and training, Bannock/Mink Creek Highway and East Fork of Mink Creek have become favorite routes (37).

Needs - There has been little done to enhance this use of the National Forest. It is one of the most popular use activities of the MCRA (38). An automobile tour could be developed by either the Forest Service, a volunteer group, or an individual for different seasons of the year.

Motorcycle and Scooter Travel - This is one of the most controversial uses of the MCRA. The two 1985 recreation user surveys along with the scoping of the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan confirms this. Of the respondents to the phone survey, there was an indication of concern to motorcycle use in the MCRA and of the people responding to the mailed survey, the same concern was expressed. It is also one of the most popular recreational activities. (For additional information, see the use figures and the 1985 Phone and Mailed Recreation Use Surveys.)

Within the MCRA, the State of Idaho Off-Road Vehicle Funds paid for a large portion of the development of the Crestline and Box Canyon Trails, relocation and/or reconstruction of the Slate Mountain and Monument Gulch Trails and the construction of two trail bridges in Monument Gulch.

Trails designated for motorcycle use within the MCRA include; Monument Gulch, Slate Mountain, Corral Creek, Cusick Creek, Valve House, Upper West Fork Mink Creek, Elk Meadows, Box Canyon, East Fork of Mink Creek, Crestline, Blind Springs, and Cow Camp. (The following two pages show these popular trails.)

The Pocatello Trail Machine Association has over the years, contributed a great deal of time doing trail maintenance on many of these trails.

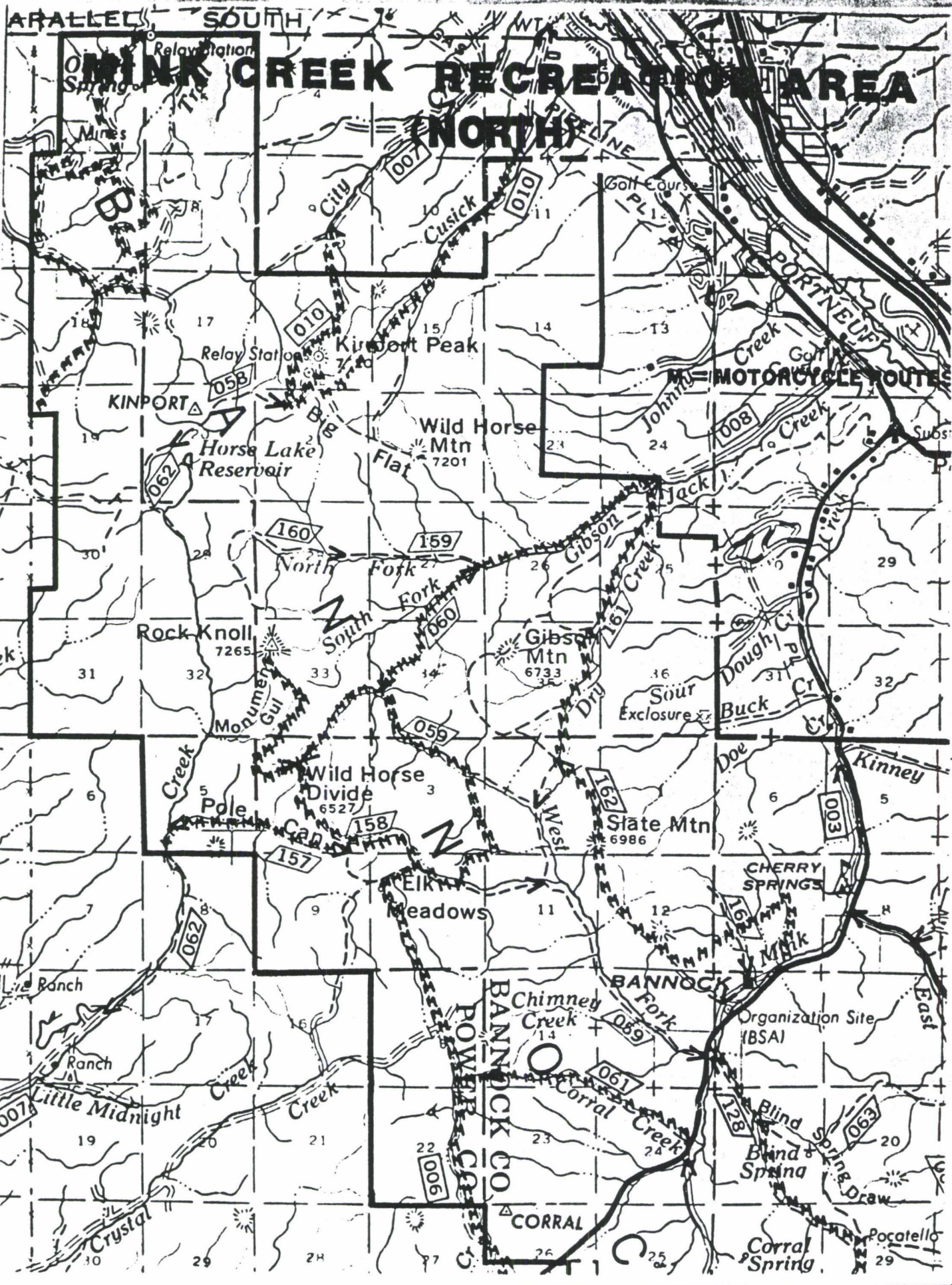
Conflicts - Include the common use of the Gibson Jack Trail and Elk Meadows by non-motorized users and motorcycles.

Impacts - There is a problem with "hill climbing" throughout the MCRA and in particular the Crestline Trailhead, South Fork of Mink Creek and Lead Draw. This is a continual concern requiring an ongoing effort of time and resources expended trying to close off these areas and rehabilitate them.

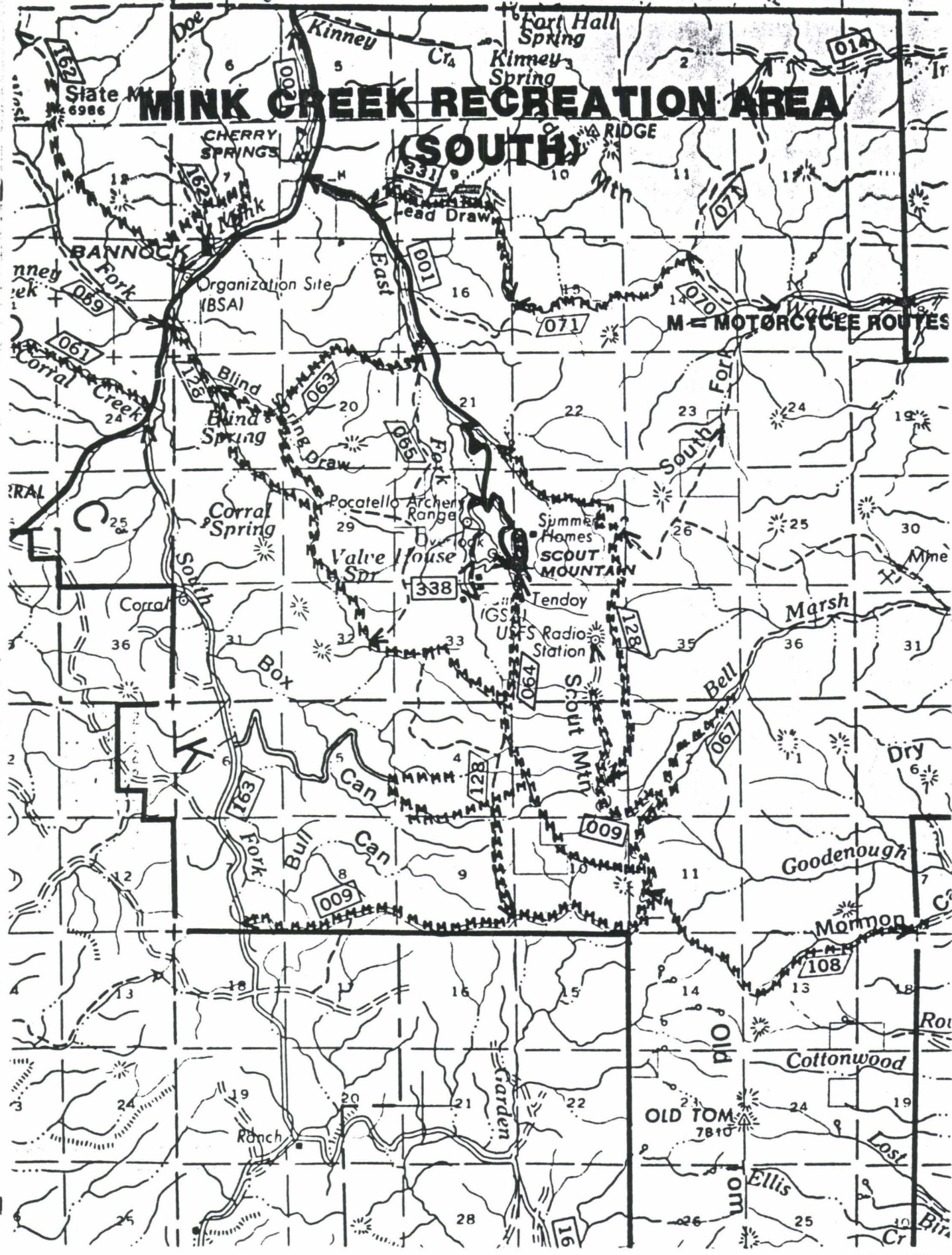
There are some motorcyclists who ignore the seasonal closure on the Gibson Jack Trail. When they do this, they get into the Elk Meadows area before it dries out causing the rutting of meadows.

There are several trails where cutting switch-backs is a problem. These include the Crestline and the Slate Mountain Trails.

Needs - All trailheads where motorcycle-designated trails take off from, are in need of unloading ramps except for the Crestline Trailhead.



MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA (SOUTH)



Ica and Snow Craft Travel - Snowmobile use is one of the most popular activities in the MCRA (39). Within the MCRA, there are 30 miles of trails groomed by the Bannock County Snowmobile Association. (Appendix 13) (See the next page for a map of the groomed routes.) There are plowed parking areas for snowmobilers at Crystal Summit, South Fork of Mink Creek, and Lead Draw. The State collects money from the sales of snowmobile licenses, and the money returns to the county that is designated by the snowmobiler. This money goes to the Bannock County Snowmobile Advisory Board for distribution. The majority of the funds are used to operate the groomer. In the winter of 1984/85, the Caribou National Forest began plowing the parking areas and billing the Snowmobile Association. Bannock County donated chains and a plow wing to the Forest Service for this work. The Forest Service signs the trails with the aid of volunteers.

Conflicts - The majority of the conflicts that occur, are between skiers and snowmobilers."You've got a cross-country skier following a snowmobile if he's setting track, but outside of that, the tolerance for snowmobilers by skiers is pretty low" (40). On the Pocatello Ranger District, "It's not so much the actual on-the-ground conflict as it is conflict in philosophies" (41). The Elk Meadows area is a popular recreation use area on the District. The only permitted access for snowmobiles is from the Crystal Summit parking area. This route is groomed for snowmobile use, but also serves as one of the more popular routes for skiers. Both groups have had historic use of the area. Prior to the 1984/85 season, Crystal Summit parking area was maintained and plowed with snowmobile licensing money. Many nordic skiers used this area and were considered "free loaders" by some of the snowmobilers. Several confrontations happened at this parking lot between the two user groups. In 1984, this lot was made a Park 'N' Ski lot with some of those dollars going into maintaining the lot. It was hoped that with each group contributing to its maintenance, it would make most people feel better about the shared use. It seemed to help the first season, but the problem resurfaced again as the result of another issue, wilderness. There was a very strong effort put forth by some individuals in Pocatello to have the West Mink RARE II area made wilderness. A few of these individuals were identified with the Nordic Skiing Community by the snowmobilers. The snowmobilers felt that this was a threat to their use of Elk Meadows and proposed to the State of Idaho Department of Recreation that they close the parking area to skier use since the lot was all on State or private land. Eventually, cooler heads prevailed, but nordic skiers do not realize how close it came to possibly happening.

The use of the routes themselves presents problems not only between skiers, but also between snowmobilers. Grooming the routes allows them to be traveled at very high speeds. There are many places along the trail that have very poor site distance because of turns and heavy vegetation. Too many snowmobilers travel at very high speeds without thought as to who or what might be coming the other way, be it a skier or another snowmachine. Occasionally, a snowmobile will travel into a nordic ski area closed to snowmobile use, but this does not happen enough to be a significant problem.

Impacts - "Impacts of snowmobiles on wildlife have now been studied in some depth.There is, however, no doubt among researchers and professionals that due to the condition of animals late in winter, additional stress is very undesirable (42)." In 1984, the Pocatello Ranger District updated their Travel Plan. After consultation with the Forest Wildlife Biologist and the State of

SNOWMOBILE ROUTES ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE POCATELLO RANGER DISTRICT

POCATELLO

PARALLEL SOUTH

GROOMED ROUTES
HEAVILY USED ROUTES
PARKING AREAS P

WARMING SHELTER

NORTH

SCALE: 1 inch = 2 miles

SNOWMOBILE ROUTES ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE POCA TELLO RANGER DISTRICT

POCA TELLO

KINPORT

BANNOCK

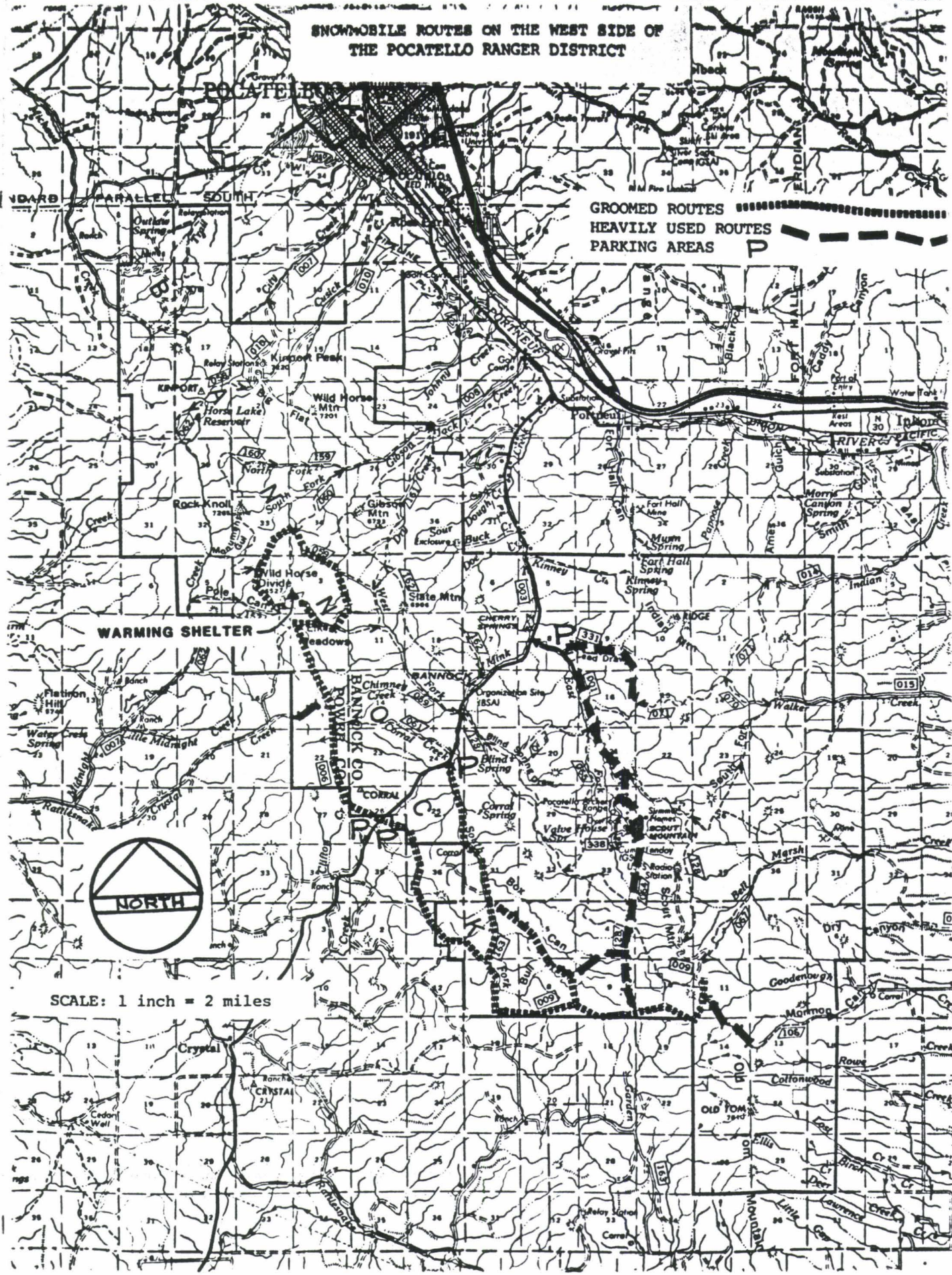
BLAINE

LEGEND:
 GROOMED ROUTES (solid line)
 HEAVILY USED ROUTES (dashed line)
 PARKING AREAS (P)

WARMING SHELTER

SCALE: 1 inch = 2 miles

NORTH



Idaho Department of Fish and Game, some additional winter range areas were closed to snowmobile use. The majority of snowmobile users respect these closures, but periodically, there is evidence found of people violating them. Sometimes snowmobilers inadvertently disturb big game, and do not realize that they are doing it. In a study done by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in the early 1970's, they discovered that under the right conditions, snowmobiles can disturb elk up to one-half mile away.

Studies have shown that small mammals can also be impacted by snowmobile traffic (43). "There is a concern voiced by some, that impacts on small mammals could eventually impact other species (predators)..... In western states.....some small animals may perish as a result of snowmobile traffic, predator populations would not usually be affected (44)." This is not thought to be a problem within the MCRA (45).

Several studies are being done to determine the impacts of snowmobiles on vegetation (46). Small trees just above snowline are the most subject to damage. Intensive snowmobile use can cause a succession of shrubbery instead of trees if trees are eliminated (47). This has not been determined to be a problem within the MCRA (48). The stocking of the aspen regeneration areas is so high (20,000 stems per acre), any mortality that might occur as a result of snowmobile use would probably be insignificant (49). The only significant concern with regards to snowmobile impacts to vegetation will be when and if the Mink Creek timber sale is harvested. This sale could have several small clearcuts that all together would total 50 acres. All of these small areas would be regenerated by planting. Several of them are close to the groomed snowmobile route and would have to be protected from snowmobiles (50).

There are conflicting reports concerning effects of groomed snowmobile routes on wintering wildlife. Some studies claim increased predator mobility while other studies have shown less stress on wildlife in using these routes for moving about in the winter (51). There is probably an element of truth in both of these perspectives. On the Pocatello Ranger District, groomed snowmachine routes significantly increase the access of hunters in the winter. This includes the legal trapping of beaver, hunting of coyotes and harvesting of deer and elk by the Bannock/Shoshone Indians along with the poaching of big game animals. There is not complete information on the overall affect this improved access may have had on animal populations in the MCRA (52).

There have been several studies done regarding the impact snowmobiles have on soils. While compacted snow reduces soil temperature which can retard soil microbe activity in the spring, there is doubt that this is biologically significant (53). Soil bulk densities have not been found to be affected by snowmobile use of an area (54). In some cases, they have been found to reduce erosion because the compacted snow melts slower and slows spring runoff (55). In other cases where the snow depths are shallow and heavy use damages vegetation, particularly on south-facing slopes, soil erosion can be increased (56).

Although no pertinent soil resource damage studies have been specifically conducted for snowmobile use on the Forest, no soil damage has been noted (57).

Bicycle (Street) - Bicycle touring and racing/training has become very popular in Pocatello since 1983. The majority of all bicycle use occurs on either the East Mink Road or the Bannock Highway which are favorite training routes for many riders. There is a misunderstanding by many people as to who is responsible for the maintenance of these roads. They are both maintained by Bannock County. Bannock Highway is a State highway and East Mink is maintained under a cooperative road maintenance agreement. The District has received letters from some of these riders, complaining about our maintenance of these roads. In addition, there was an Edward Abbey-inspired type activity by some of the riders. They went up Bannock Highway painting derogatory remarks about Forest management and the road condition of the highway itself along with indicating the portion of the road needing repair. The District explained to the people who wrote us letters about the maintenance responsibilities, but there was no attempt to paint a response on the highway.

Conflicts - The major conflict is between bicycles and automobiles. Automobiles in the Pocatello area, are not accustomed to sharing roads with bicycles. As a result, they are not looking for them when they drive and are not always as courteous as they should be. Some bicycle riders, as a result of this, are not very courteous either. Some of these groups of riders ride several abreast across their lane of traffic instead of single file, forcing cars to go around them in the other lane which upsets the automobile drivers. It is difficult for the bicyclist to get close to the shoulder since there is no paved shoulder and the edges of these roads are rather rough.

Impacts - So far the only impact of bicyclists has been the unnerving of some drivers and a little paint on the road.

Needs - A paved shoulder needs to be constructed along these routes wherever physically possible.

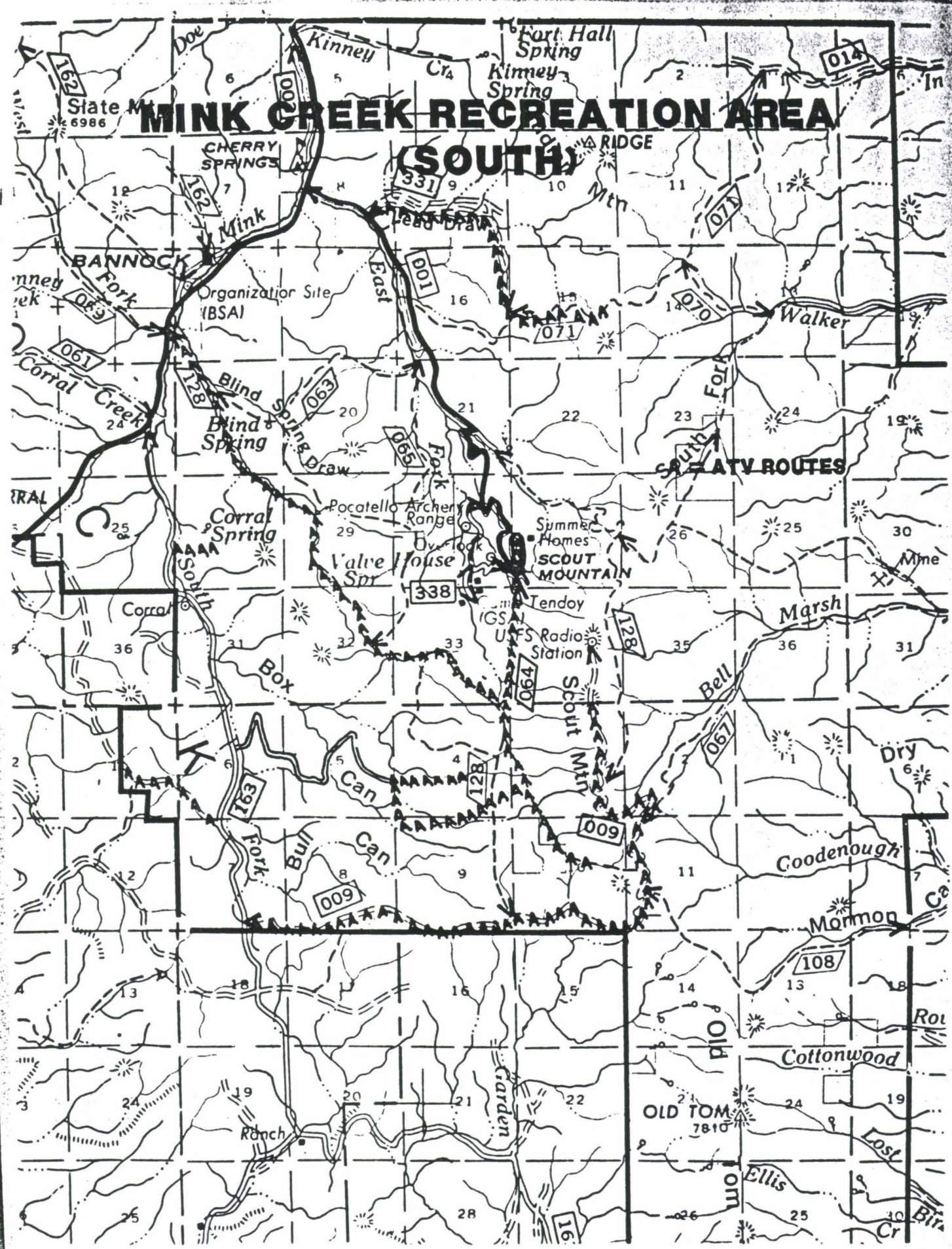
3- & 4-Wheel All Terrain Vehicles - This form of recreation has been gaining popularity over the last five years. Thirty-two percent of the respondents to the 1985 Phone Survey indicated that they used ATV's. Many of the trails in the MCRA are narrow and steep which limits their use by ATV's. A lot of the use by ATV's occurs on the more primitive roads in the MCRA. (See the maps on the following two pages.)

When conditions are right, there is some limited use of the groomed snowmobile trails by ATV's.

Occasionally, the Pocatello Ranger District receives complaints from snowmobilers about the rutting of groomed trails by ATV's. In the fall during hunting season, some ATV's ignore the Forest Travel Plan and enter closed areas to either hunt or retrieve game.

Needs - An ATV use map needs to be developed to show users where safe and fun routes are.

MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA (SOUTH)

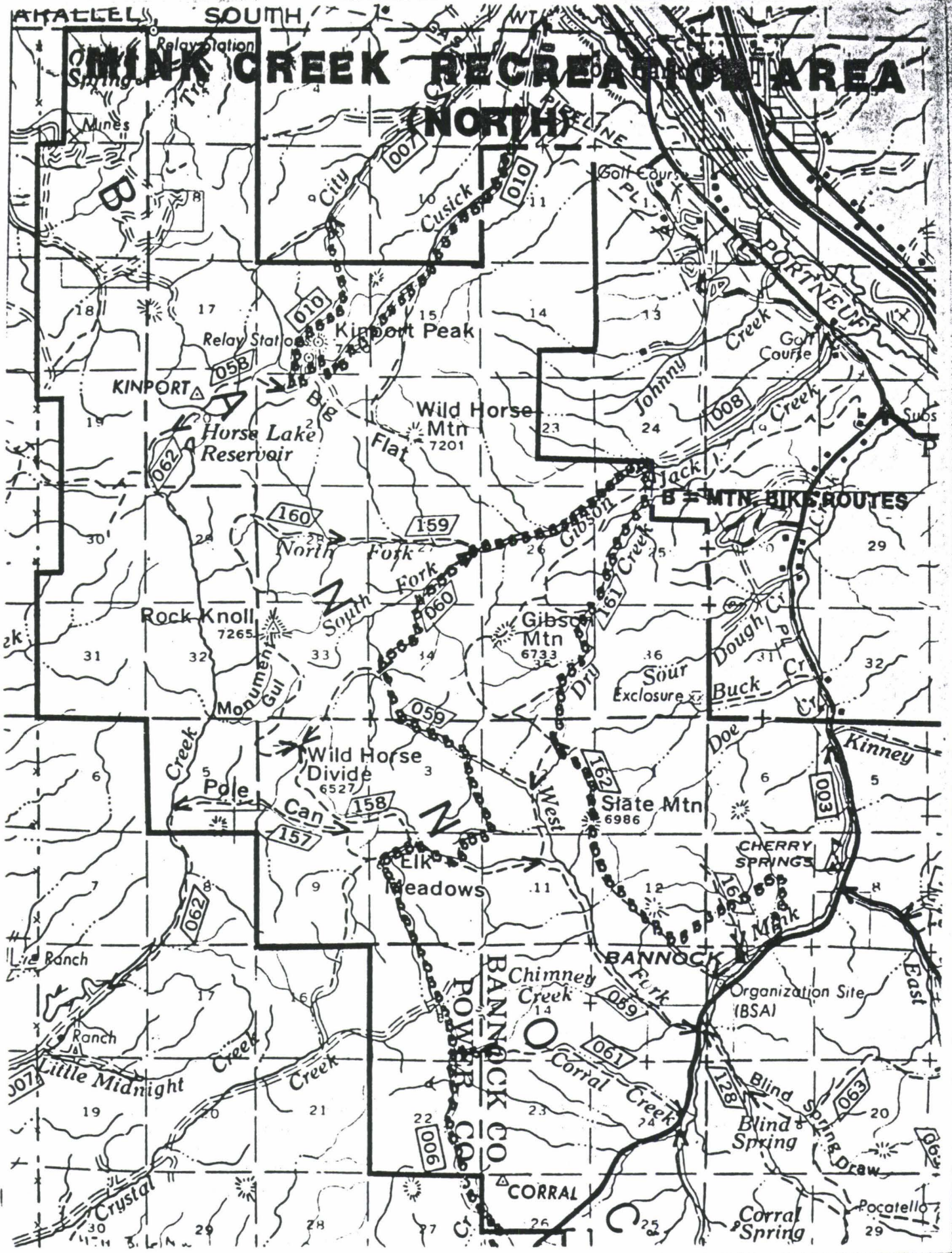


Mountain Bicycles - This form of recreation did not even exist four years ago on the National Forest. In a very short period of time, this has become an activity that is growing rapidly in popularity. On the written survey, nine percent of the respondents said that they used mountain bikes; on the phone survey, sixteen percent of the respondents said they had mountain bikes, and one percent of the respondents said they thought they might start this activity within the next five years.

Conflicts - Present conflicts are limited due to the newness of this activity. The only documented conflict has been limited to one area. The Pocatello Ranger District, through the update of the Forest Travel Plan, made the determination that mountain bikes should follow the same travel restrictions as motorcycles. This restricted their use on a few trails, most noticeably the West Fork of Mink Creek Trail. This restriction was imposed for three reasons: 1) Out-of-season use in wet meadows and other sensitive areas can cause rutting or damage to the vegetation, 2) In heavy use areas, they can be hazardous to non-mechanized users since they travel at high speeds downhill with limited noise to warn of their approach, and 3) there should be some trails where users should be able to expect not to run into any modern contrivances of man. As soon as these restrictions were imposed, the Pocatello Ranger District started receiving complaints from mountain bike riders who wanted to continue to use the West Mink Creek Trail.

Impacts - There have been no known resource impacts reported.

Needs - There was a need proposed by the 1985 Recreation Survey to develop a mountain bike route in the Scout Mountain area. (The next two pages show the more popular mountain bike routes.)



MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA

(NORTH)

KINPORT

Horse Lake Reservoir

Rock Knoll 7265

Wild Horse Divide 6527

Gibson Mtn 6733

State Mtn 6986

BANNOCK

Chimney Creek

Corral Creek

CORRAL

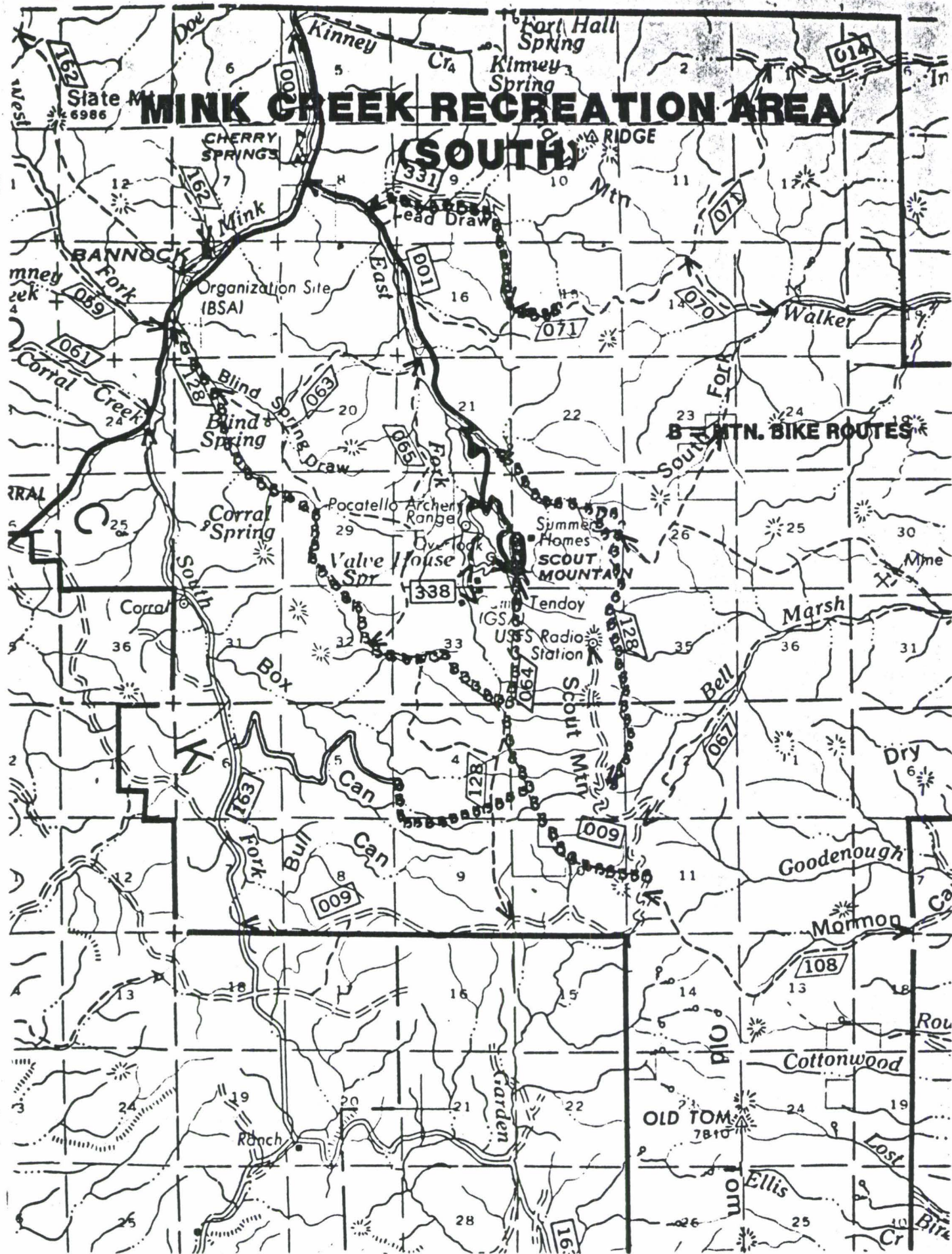
CHERRY SPRINGS

Organization Site (BSA)

Blind Spring

Corral Spring

Pocatello



Viewing Scenery - The most popular scenic areas in the MCRA include: The narrows on the South Fork of Mink Creek Road, the saddle above Mormon Canyon and Garden Creek, the old road to Justice Park, top of Scout Mountain, the Box Canyon Road, the top half of the Crestline Trail, West Mink Trail, view from the White Rock Overlook Site, upper Gibson Jack Trail, portions of Elk Meadows, and portions of the East Mink Creek and Box Canyon Trails.

Potential conflicts with, or threats to, the scenic qualities of these areas include the following:

South Fork Narrows - Loss of the mature Douglas-fir through insect and disease attack. Erosion and loss of vegetation due to spring flooding.

Mormon Canyon/Canyon Saddle - Erosion from misuse of ORV's, increased insect and disease attack and wildfire are threats to Mormon and Goodenough Canyons. Development of the proposed Garden Creek Subdivision could have a detrimental effect on this area.

Old Justice Park Road - Road slumping and erosion, development of the private inholding, increased insect and disease activity are threats to this area.

Top of Scout Mountain - For years there has been use of this location for electronic sites, and this use will continue. In the past, some people going to the top of Scout Mountain have vandalized these developments. Any new electronic installations would not significantly impact the site due to the pre-existing uses. Periodically, the view is impacted by air pollution originating in the Pocatello vicinity.

Box Canyon Road - Aspen harvesting periodically impacts the scenic quality of the road though the long-term impact from loss of these aspen stands would be greater if they were not managed. Complaints of cattle use of this area are periodically registered. There are isolated stands of Douglas-fir that have been subject to insect and disease attack. A proposed timber sale near the upper end of this road could impact the scenic quality in one location.

Box Canyon Trail - This trail was constructed in 1982. The only scenic conflict is with cattle use at the upper end. Insect and disease infestation in the future could pose a problem in some of the stands that this trail passes through.

Crestline Trail - Continued increased insect activity in the adjacent timber stands will affect the scenic quality while some stands are subject to wildfire, the lower end of the trail has been and continues to have problems with motorcyclists riding off of the trail. This trail on occasion is subject to heavy cattle use.

West Mink Creek Trail - The only potential impacts to the scenic quality of this area within the Research Natural Area are wildfire and insect and disease problems. The portion of the trail above the closure gate (to keep cattle and ORV's from using this area) receives periodic complaints about cattle use. In addition, there has been a problem with motorcycles riding off of the trails/road when the area is wet and causing rutting.

White Rock Overlook Site - The only threats to retaining the scenic value of this site is the continued insect and disease infestation of the conifer stands in the foreground and middleground and temporary hazy conditions from air pollution originating from the Pocatello area.

Gibson Jack Trail - The lower trail is presently in need of some rehabilitation. The trail was formerly a road that still has some erosion problems. The condition of this trail has been improving along with the public's use of it, including respecting the seasonal closure, but there are still problems with some users riding the trail out-of-season causing rutting on and off the trail. The upper end of the trail is very scenic with insect and disease problems being the only concern.

East Mink Trail - There are sections of this trail that need to be monitored for erosion problems. About ten years ago, there was a timber sale adjacent to the trail. Most users today do not realize there was a sale in the vicinity. There is another sale planned for 1987 adjacent to the middle portion of the trail. This sale has the potential to temporarily affect the scenic quality of the trail. When cattle start using the area, some people feel this detracts from the scenic quality. The Forest Service closed a road and trail adjacent to the East Mink Trail in 1980. There is still evidence to these old improvements generally due to some ORV users who ignore the closures. The upper end of the trail goes through a private inholding. Use of this area by the owner in the future, could have a serious effect on its scenic quality.

Needs - (See Automobile Travel Needs.)

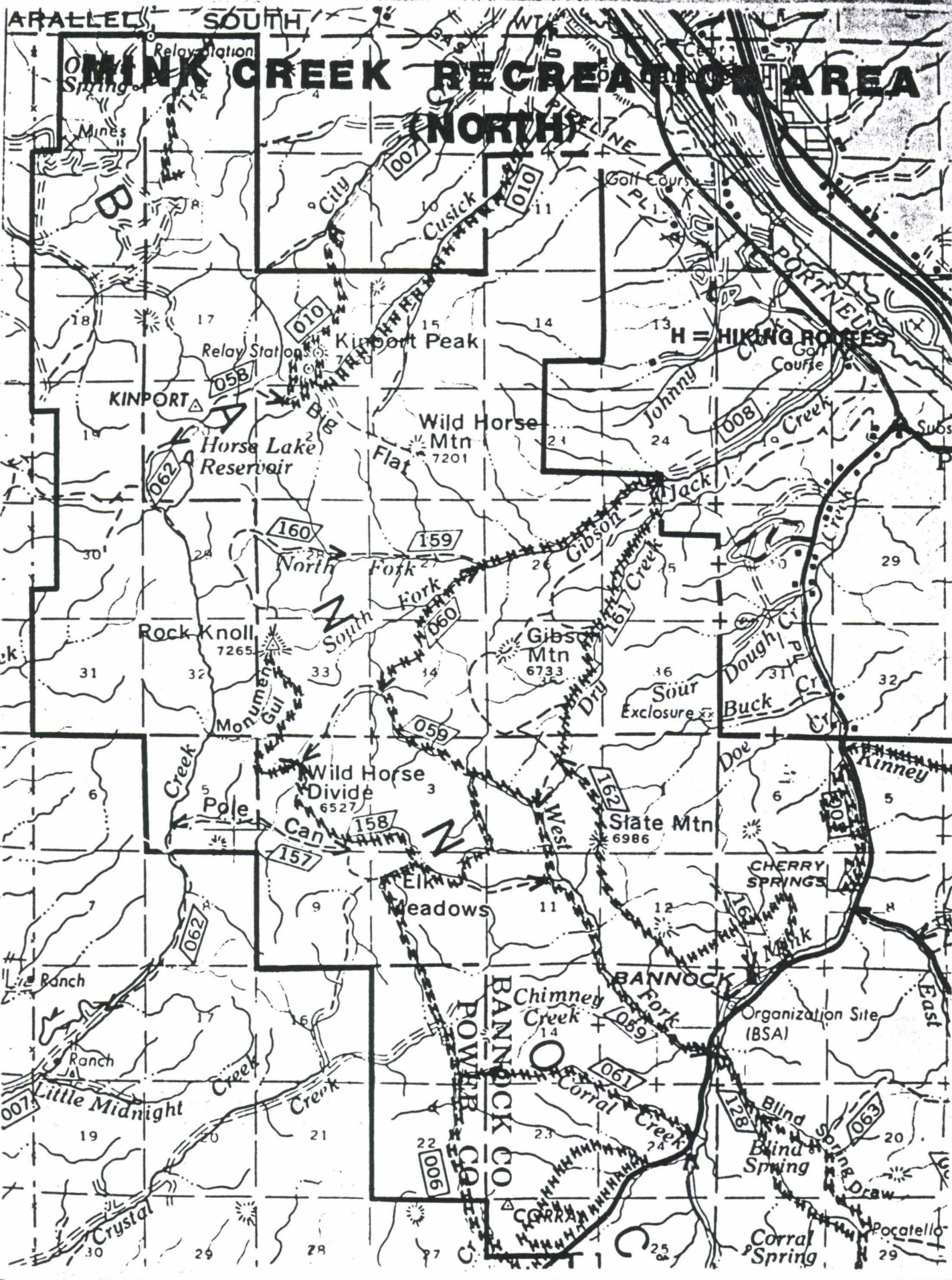
Hiking and Walking - The majority of all hiking and walking occurring within the MCRA is associated with day trips. Because of its close proximity to Pocatello, people are able to hike in and out to the furthest point on any trail in one day even though the trail network is quite extensive (18 trails and 69.8 miles). There are people who do overnight backpacking by hiking some of the longer loop trails, but they are the exception.

The most popular hiking trails within the MCRA are Gibson Jack Creek, Cherry Springs Nature Trail, and West Fork of Mink Creek. Other popular trails include Slate Mountain Trail, Corral Creek, East Fork of Mink Creek, Box Canyon, and Valve House Draw. All of the other trails within the MCRA do not receive a great deal of hiking use. (The following two pages show hiking trails in the MCRA.)

Conflicts - Hiking conflicts with motorcycle and scooter travel were discussed in that section. Conflicts with horse and mountain bike use will be discussed in those sections.

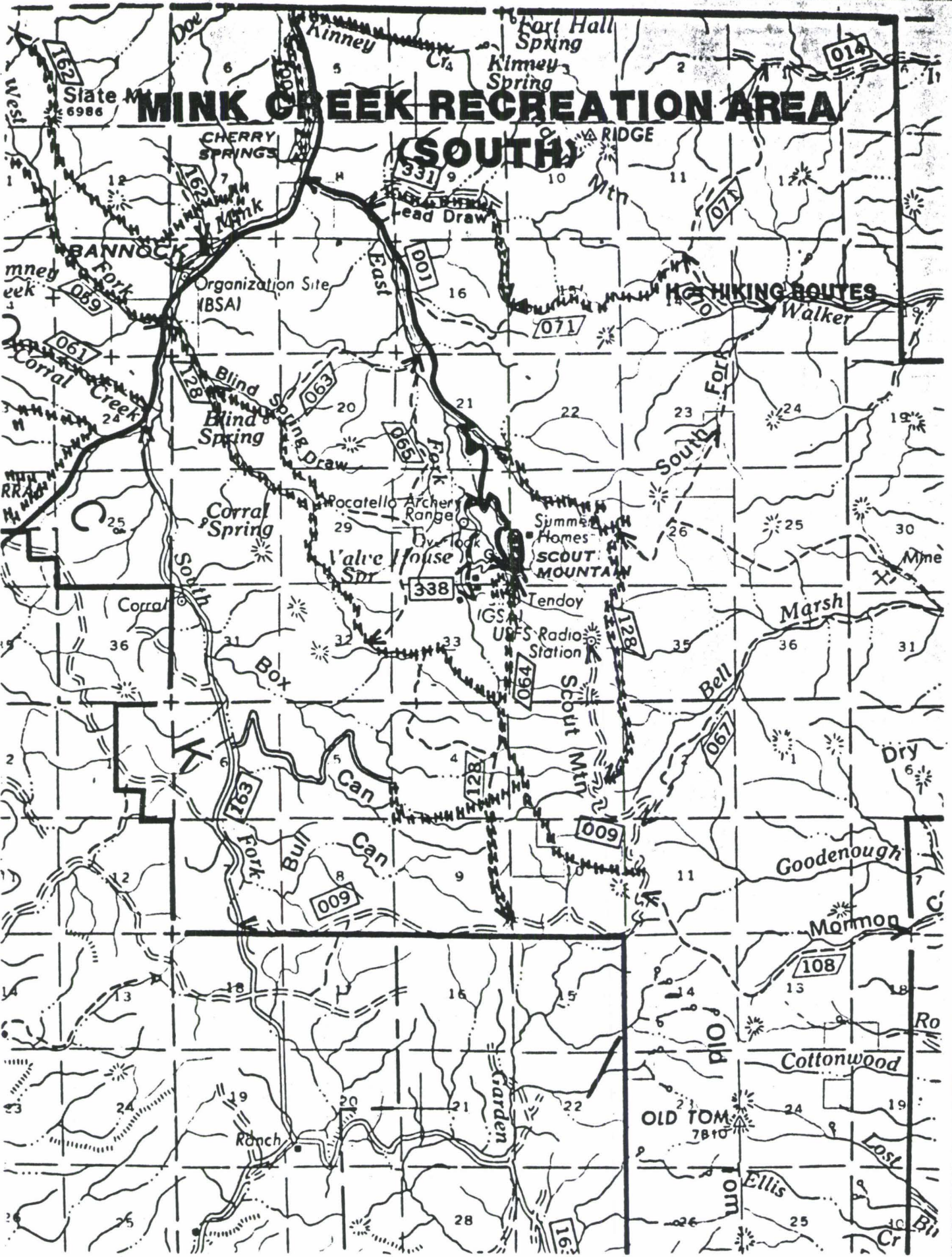
Impacts - Impacts that hiking causes include littering, human waste near live streams, loss of vegetation, theft and/or destruction of trail signs and soil erosion on trail switch-backs. It is not felt that hiking is impacting wildlife resources at this time (58).

The District runs a "Pack-In/Pack-Out" Program for its dispersed areas. Littering, generally, is not a major problem on trails but it does require some management time and effort.



MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA

(SOUTH)



Soil erosion on trails is generally a result of several types of uses. There are some trails that are almost exclusively used by hikers that have some minor problems. Some of these include cutting switch-backs in Cherry Springs and West Mink Creek.

The most expensive and continuous problem that hikers cause is the theft and destruction of trail signs. They tend to be a popular item in peoples dens, bed-and dorm-rooms. Occasionally in the spring, the Pocatello Ranger District receives a phone call from Idaho State University asking if someone would come by and pick up some Forest Service signs that were left behind in a dorm-room when the students left for the summer.

Water quality is by far the greatest potential impact hikers have on other resources. Results of water quality analyses, conducted from 1976 through 1981 in West Fork of Mink and Gibson Jack Creeks, indicates that human sources of pollution do occur infrequently and most likely on weekends (59). In addition, humans are the most common carriers of Giardia. Some traces of Giardia have been found in beavers trapped out of Gibson Jack. Ongoing monitoring needs to be done in these important watersheds. Funding for this activity was cut off in 1982.

Horseback Riding - The following chart shows trails for horseback use ranked in popularity. The popularity was rated by two former recreation guards, Jeff Jones and Jim Gilsdorf, who have worked on the Pocatello Ranger District from 1979-1986 and 1981-1986 respectively.

POPULARITY RATING

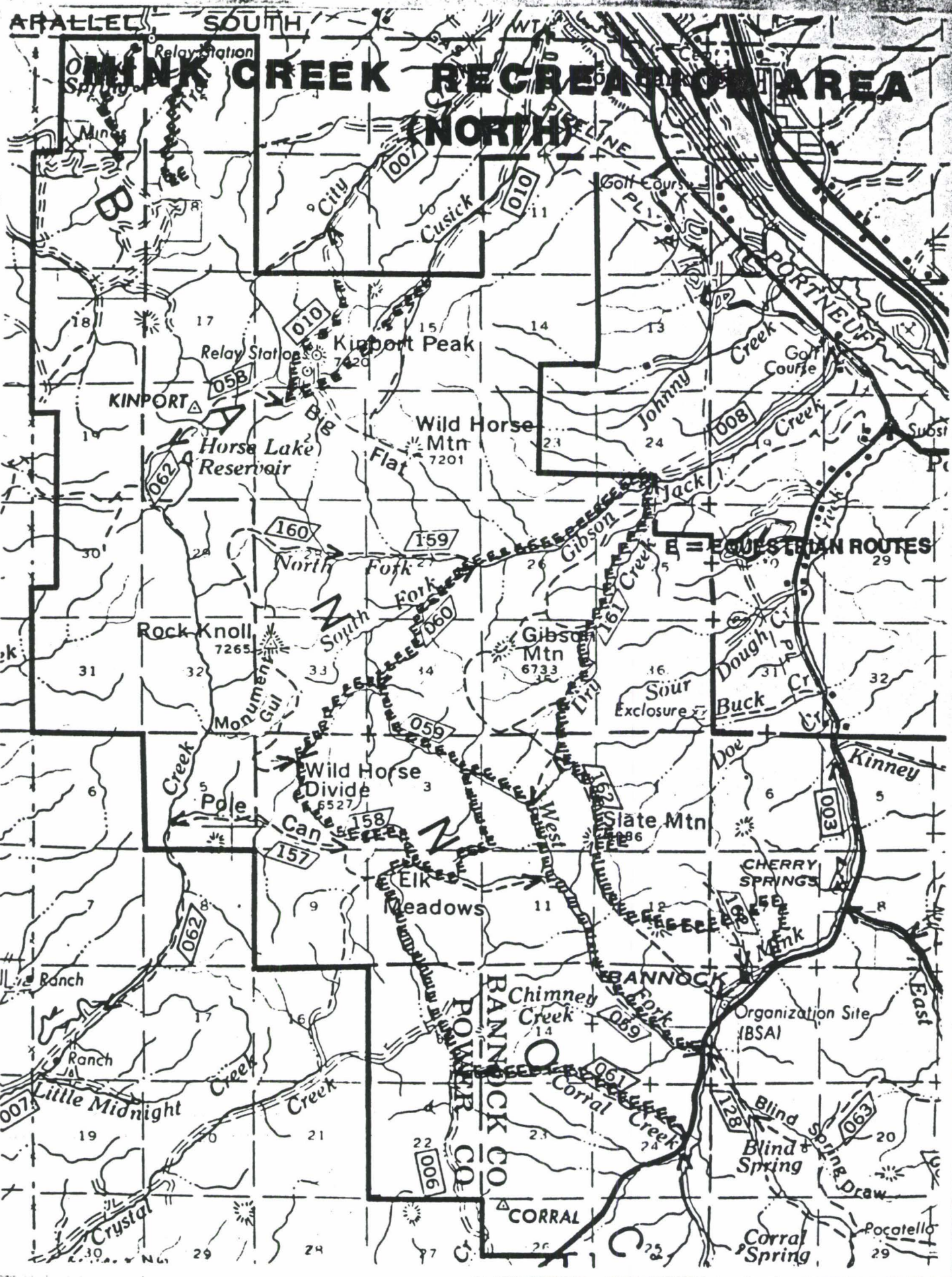
TRAIL NAME

#1	West Fork of Mink Creek
#2	Gibson Jack
#2	North Fork Slate Mountain
#3	East Mink Creek
#4	Corral Creek
#5	Box Canyon
#5	Valve House
#5	Scout Mountain Top Road

NOTE: (See the next two pages for maps of the more popular trails.)

Horseback use begins as soon as the trails start to bare off in the spring and continues until the snow prohibits this activity. There is a large population of horses owned by people living adjacent to the National Forest on small "ranchettes" in Mink Creek and Trail Creek. Most of these people ride from their homes onto the National Forest. A smaller number, trailer their horses to these various trailheads. Hunting deer and elk by horseback is a popular activity in the fall.

There are also many "group" rides throughout the year including annual events such as dressage competitions.



Needs - All popular trailheads need improvements for horses such as hitching racks and unloading ramps.

Conflicts - The only conflict that has been identified would not be considered a major one. On popular trails some hikers complain of yesterday's meal being left behind by horses. This would primarily be on the West Mink and Gibson Jack Trails.

Impacts - There is some concern in limited areas, of horses using trails when the tread is damp or soft in the spring and fall. The greatest potential impact is the use of horses in the watershed as outlined in the "Watershed" portion of this section.

Cross-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing - Cross-country skiing is one of the most popular recreation activities in the MCRA. There are opportunities for the beginner to the most advanced skier. The Pocatello Ranger District runs a Park 'N' Ski Program in cooperation with the City of Pocatello, Bannock County, and Pocatello Nordic Association. In the last two years, the participation in the MCRA by the Ski Association, has been minimal and the City not much more. There are four Park 'N' Ski lots in Mink Creek.

The most popular ski routes in the MCRA are West Fork of Mink Creek, Crystal Summit, Valve House, Blind Springs, Corral Creek, East Mink, Cherry Springs, Lead Draw, South Fork of Mink Creek, Porcelain Pot Gulch, and Gibson Jack. (See the following two pages for maps of these routes.)

There have been 13.5 miles of ski trails and two Park 'N' Ski lots added to the MCRA in the last four years. (Appendix 14) These were developed through the use of volunteers in order to reduce the pressures on the existing facilities due to the heavy use of trails and parking areas.

Based on the user survey, there is a lot more snowshoeing going on than the Forest Service was aware of. Most of these users are seeking solitude or doing nature study. Since they are less constrained to developed sites and trails, their use is more dispersed and isolated.

Conflicts - The major conflicts are with snowmobile use which is outlined under the "Ice and Snowcraft" section. Another conflict, is the parking of automobiles along the roads which conflicts with traffic and the plowing of roads. This parking occurs by people when they are skiing in areas with no trail system, the Park 'N' Ski lots are full, or when they are trying to avoid buying the \$5.00 Park 'N' Ski sticker.

Impacts - Skiers are notorious for bringing their fidos into the municipal watershed. This can cause a problem with water quality. There is a minor problem with skiers venturing to close to the elk and deer herd. They do this when the animals are on their winter range to get that perfect picture. On one backcountry ski trail some signs have disappeared. This has also happened on another part of the District into the Yurt system. It is suspected that the signs are being removed by some "elitist type" skiers in order to reduce the number of people who might "find" or venture into "their" areas.

WARNING SHELTER

NORDIC SKI TRAILS (W. OF MINK CR.)

EASIEST

MORE DIFFICULT

MOST DIFFICULT

PARK "N" SKI AREAS

GROOMED SNOWMACHINE

ROUTE

VALVE HOUSE

DRAW

WEST MINK CREEK

PARITY SKI TRAIL

CORRAL CREEK

PORCELAIN
FOOT GULCH

CRYSTAL SUMMIT

Dispersed Picnicking - This activity is very popular throughout the MCRA all seasons of the year. In the summer, people go into the MCRA for the expressed purpose of enjoying a meal away from the city. Year-round people picnic in association with other activities be it a boda bag and cheese while cross-country skiing in Corral Creek or a tailgate picnic at White Rock Overlook. This activity is well distributed throughout the MCRA with areas adjacent to streams receiving the heaviest use. The more popular areas include: Lead Draw, East Fork of Mink Creek, Pine Plantation, Box Canyon, Gibson Jack, Clifton Creek, Elk Meadows and West Mink. (See the following two pages for popular dispersed picnic areas.)

Conflicts - There are certain picnic activities that conflict with each other. An example is a motorcycle club having a "function" in Lead Draw at the same time the Cub Scouts are having a picnic. Another conflict is between picnickers and cattle grazing. Cows and people are often attracted to the same locations at the same time or the cows leave evidence of having been there first. These locations tend to be adjacent to streams and shaded areas such as the Pine Plantation.

Impacts - The majority of the impacts are associated with litter, driving vehicles off roads and causing vegetative and soil damage accessing sites, ground disturbance on popular sites, vandalism of signs, damage to trees by cutting, breaking branches or carving on them, and improper human waste disposal. (Appendix 15)

Dispersed Camping - Dispersed camping locations are similar to the favorite picnic spots. The most popular areas being East Mink, Lead Draw, Box Canyon, Crystal Summit, South Fork of Mink Creek, Box Canyon, Pine Plantation and Elk Meadows. (See the following two pages for the more popular dispersed camping areas.)

Conflicts - (Same as Dispersed Picnicking.)

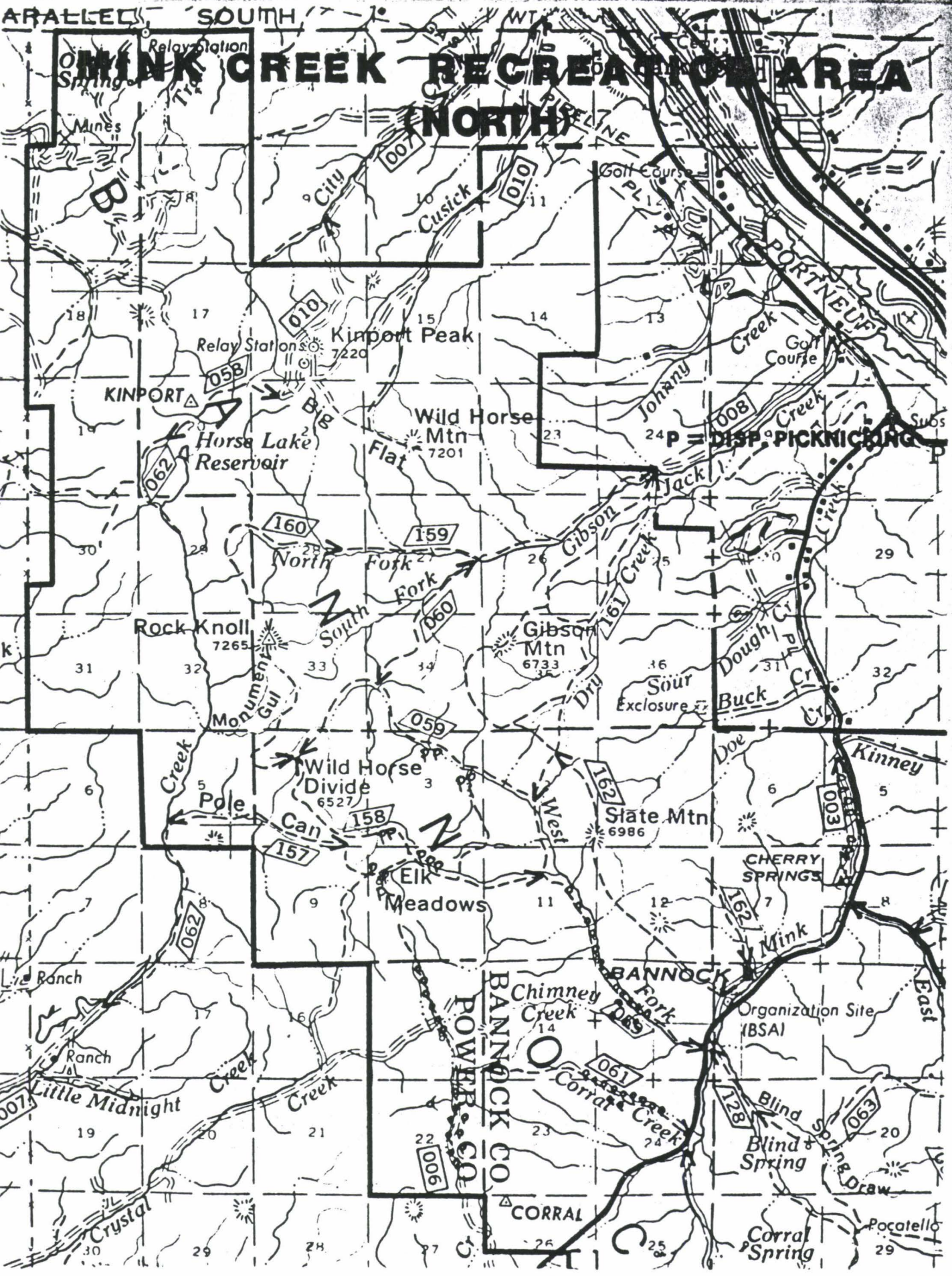
Impacts - (Same as Dispersed Picnicking.)

Fishing - The most popular fishing areas are Cherry Springs, the middle and lower reaches of Mink Creek, the middle reaches of South Fork of Mink Creek, Gibson Jack Creek, and the beaver ponds on West Mink. Fishing also occurs in some smaller side drainages, but they usually fall into the category of "secret fishing holes".

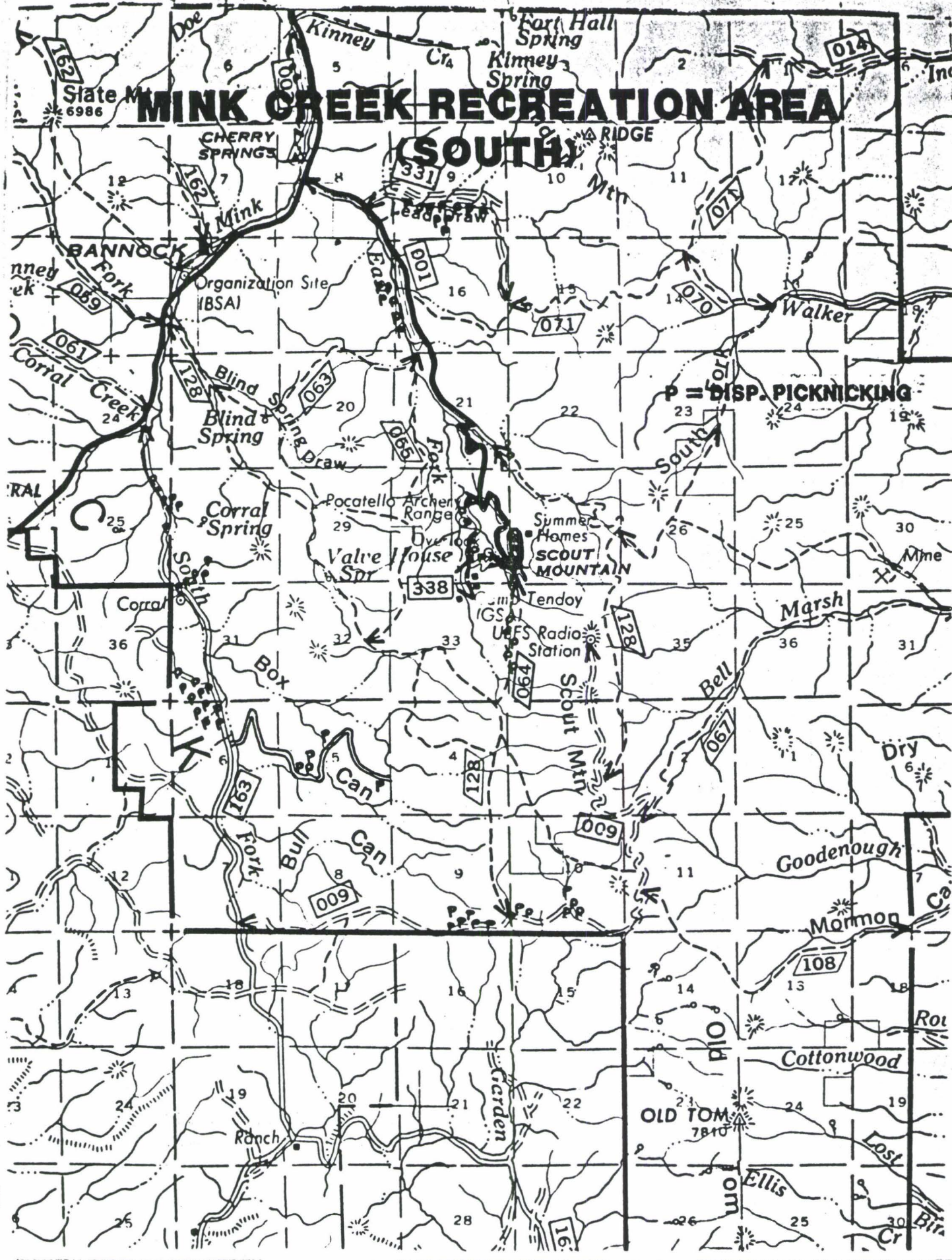
Last fall, the Kiwanis, Cooperative Wilderness Handicapped Outdoor Group, along with other volunteers, began developing handicapped fishing spots at Cherry Springs Nature Area.

Conflicts - As discussed previously, cattle are the greatest conflict with fishing. Other conflicts include other recreationists using the same areas.

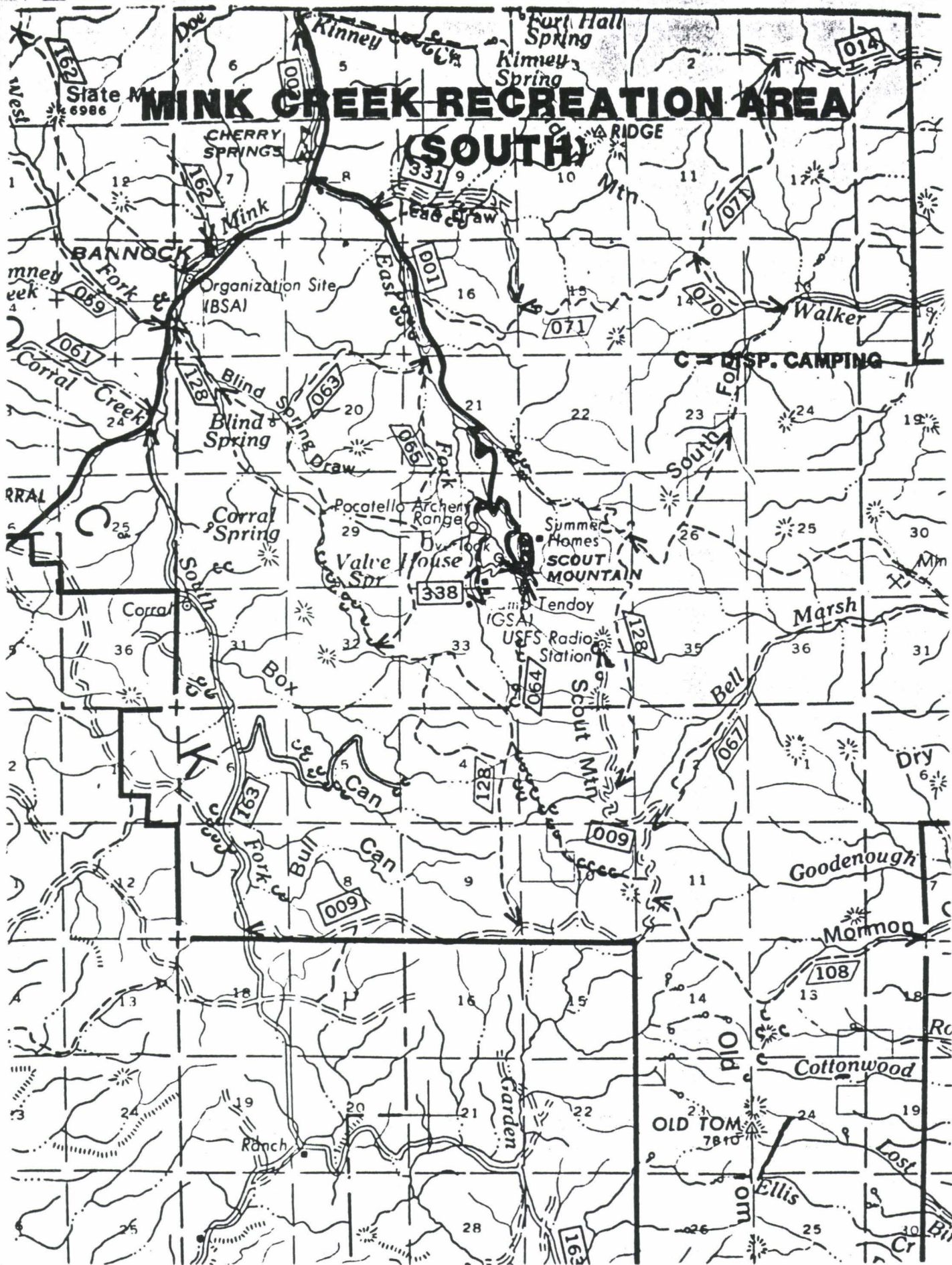
Impacts - (Impacts are similar to Dispersed Picnicking.)



MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA (SOUTH)



MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA (SOUTH)



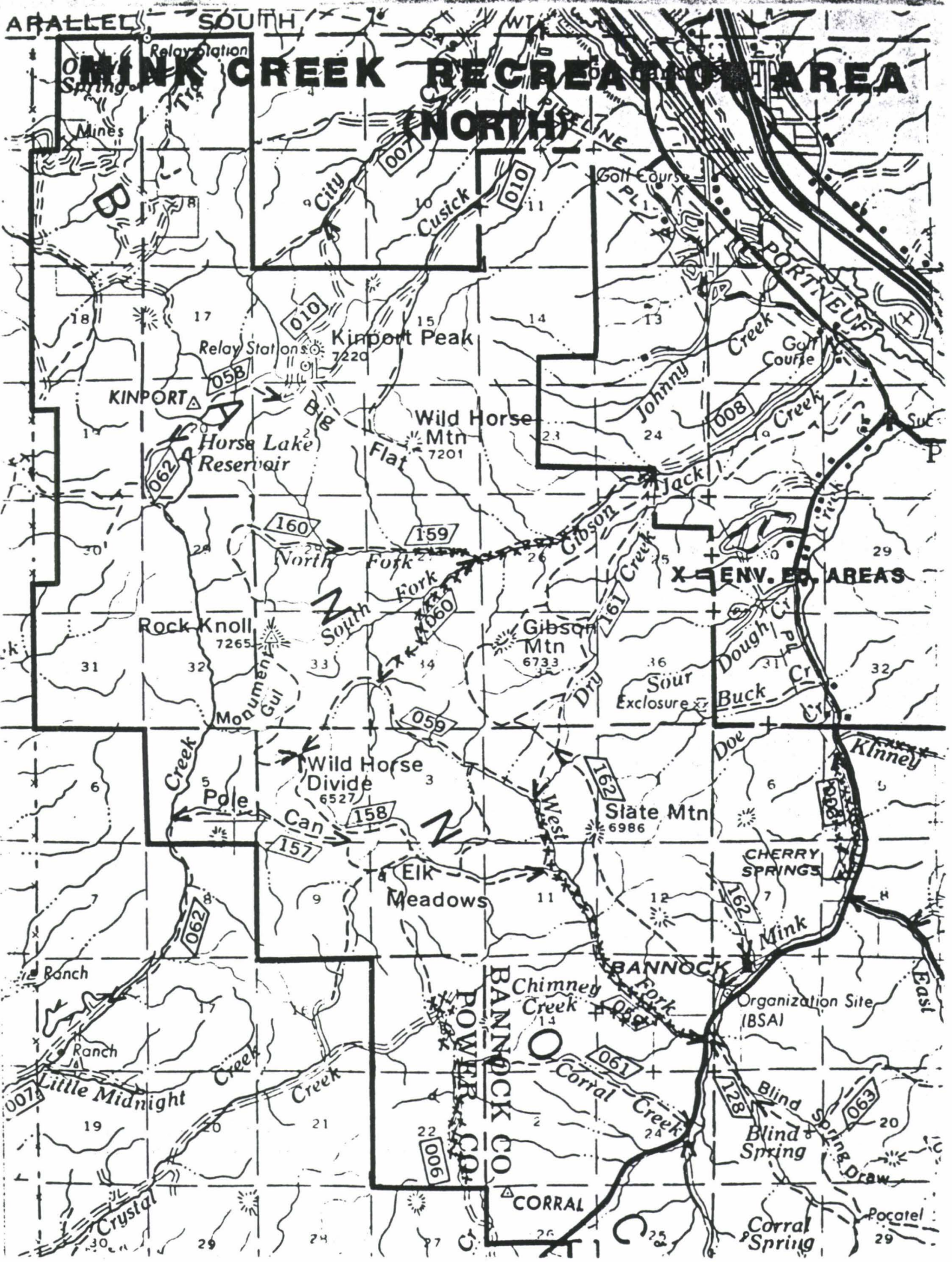
Nature Study - This activity occurs throughout the MCRA at different times and locations throughout the year. (See the following pages for the popular areas.) The most popular location is by far, Cherry Springs Nature Area. School District #25 brings up bus loads of students every spring and fall. Various university classes utilize the MCRA for class field trips and research projects. (Appendix 16)

Gibson Jack and West Mink and Research Natural Areas are located in the MCRA. There is a nature trail at Cherry Springs and one at the Scout Mountain Picnic Area.

The Pocatello Ranger District in cooperation with the Environmental Education Association of Southeast Idaho run 13 weekly Environmental Education Programs at the Scout Mountain Amphitheater in the summer with plans to move this activity to Cherry Springs Nature Area.

Conflicts - This activity does not conflict with other activities, however, some activities conflict with nature study. Cherry Springs Nature Area is closed to hunting although hunters do continue to go into this area to hunt deer and grouse. This in particular, keeps the grouse population down. Respondents to the mailed survey identified the following as conflicts with nature study: 1) cows using some riparian areas, 2) aspen cutting may impact some blue bird nesting, and 3) motorcycle use within the Gibson Jack Research Natural Area.

Impacts - There have been no impacts identified as they directly relate to this activity.



X - ENV. ED. AREAS

This topographic map depicts the Mink Creek Recreation Area (South). The map features a grid system with numbers 1 through 36. Key geographical features include the Mink Creek, Corral Creek, and various springs such as Cherry Springs, Blind Spring, and Corral Spring. The map also shows the Bannock Fork, Walker Fork, and South Fork. Notable landmarks include the Pocatello Archery Range, Summer Homes, Scout Mountain, and the Tendency USFS Radio Station. The map includes a legend for 'ENV. ED. AREAS' and a scale bar. The title 'MINK CREEK RECREATION AREA (SOUTH)' is prominently displayed at the top.

Organizational Camping - Camp Taylor is the only organizational camp under Special Use Permit within the MCRA. They have one large lodge and several cabins that they use for their Campfire Programs, and they make available to the general public on a rental basis.

Conflicts - Camp Taylor's activities do not conflict with any other known activity with the exception of an occasional gate being left open or damage to the fence from kids climbing on it.

Impacts - Camp Taylor's activities are localized and any of the impacts are limited in nature. The administrators of Camp Taylor try to teach good land ethic to the users. Cattle occasionally get into the camping area and cause some problems with the camping activities. Vandalism of the facility, is probably the greatest impact to Camp Taylor. In 1981, vandals burned the main lodge to the ground.

Recreation Cabin Use - There are nine cabins within the MCRA. These are connected with the Scout Mountain Campground water system and are part of the fencing system that keeps cattle out of the campground.

Conflicts - Use of these cabins does not conflict with any of the other activities. There has been a problem with cattle getting into the summer home area and causing problems. Hunters venture into this area and have the potential of being a danger to the users. Occasionally, vandals or thieves, break into these cabins.

Impacts - There are very limited impacts as a result of these activities. On occasion, a water line will break and cause some minor erosion problems.

Hunting. Big Game - This activity consists of an extremely heavy deer hunt which is one of the three heaviest in the State (60). A limited elk hunt by the general public (30 permits) occurs in this area. The Bannock-Shoshone Indians harvest of elk is much higher. There is an Outfitter and Guide Permit issued in part of the MCRA for trophy size deer. The majority of his clientele are from Texas.

Conflicts - Most other activities cease for the ten days the general deer hunt is open, due to the large numbers of hunters in the field. On opening morning of deer season, there were approximately 620 hunters that passed through one information station at Cherry Springs, between the hours of 5:00 and 7:00 a.m. in 1985.

Impacts - There are very limited impacts associated with the actual harvesting of the animals. The greatest impacts that the MCRA receives all year are associated with this activity. These include ORV damage to all areas of the MCRA especially to roads when they are wet, theft and destruction of signs (30 signs were either destroyed or stolen during the ten days of the general hunt in 1985), littering, and the cutting of fences.

Gathering Forest Products - The primary activity associated with gathering forest products is the harvesting of fuelwood. Other activities include: collecting rocks, picking choke cherries and other berries and wildflowers.

There are two types of fuelwood gathering in the MCRA. There is the collection of "dead or down" wood and the harvesting of green aspen from designated fuelwood areas. The Pocatello Ranger District annually sells over 1,000 permits for this activity with the majority of the cutting being done in the aspen areas.

Conflicts - The roads that are traveled on in order to access the fuelwood areas, receive heavy use conflicting with other traffic. The heaviest use occurs on the main Mink Creek and South Fork of Mink Creek Roads. The increased activity in the woods and the associated noise disturbs other recreational pursuits.

Impacts - Firewood gatherers are responsible for a good deal of road damage. They often attempt to travel on roads when they are wet and soft. They also do damage to off-road areas under the same road conditions. The heavy road use causes some siltation of streams. There is a temporary degradation of the visual quality but in the long-term, regeneration of the aspen stands is an improvement. There is also some impact to trees not scheduled for harvest. Air quality is affected temporarily due to road dust and burning of slash piles. This activity displaces cattle and wildlife. It temporarily removes cover while in the long-term it enhances wildlife habitat.

One person responding to the written survey expressed a concern with aspen harvesting conflicting with blue bird nesting. This possible impact should be investigated.

PRESENT RECREATION FUNDING OR "WHO'S OX IS GETTING GORED"

Anytime a discussion comes up on funding between units, it is guaranteed to provoke bloodshed. The "haves" say there is good justification for why they are funded at a higher level, and the "have nots" say B.S.

The following table was developed from the 1985 RIM use figures and with Program Budget Information provided by John R. Glenn, Regional Recreation Plans and Administration Officer, Intermountain Region.

A Comparison of Operation, Maintenance and Program Costs
Per Recreation Visitor Day in 1985.*

UNIT	O&M, P&M, RECREATION WILDERNESS DOLLARS*	RYD'S	COST/RYD
Pocatello R.D.	46,956	230,400	\$.20
Montpelier R.D.	96,502	227,600	\$.42
Soda Springs R.D.	30,472	31,900	\$.37
Malad R.D.	26,287	87,800	\$.30
Caribou NF	257,920	627,700	\$.41
Ashley NF	949,540	1,457,900	\$.65
Boise NF	547,920	1,758,700	\$.31
Bridger-Teton NF	800,150	2,041,300	\$.39
Challis NF	372,440	512,600	\$.73
Dixie NF	350,240	1,393,000	\$.25
Fishlake NF	411,240	1,292,000	\$.32
Humboldt NF	222,730	537,800	\$.41
Manti-LaSal NF	348,760	701,200	\$.50
Payette NF	233,750	683,400	\$.34
Salmon NF	270,700	417,100	\$.65
Sawtooth NF	1,073,290	1,881,300	\$.57
Targhee NF	709,230	1,697,200	\$.42
Toiyabe NF	641,260	2,409,700	\$.27
Uinta NF	455,060	3,038,200	\$.15
Wasatch NF	1,504,610	6,155,500	\$.24

*Does not include cultural resource or construction dollars.

Funding, of course, is not based on cost per recreation visitor day. If it were, everyone would have to take lie detector tests annually when RIM use figures are submitted. Cost per RVD does provide for an interesting comparison. It should also provide a red flag for further investigation of those units that fall well outside of the average. This is especially true since the Pocatello District falls into the "have not" category.

WHAT THIS MEANS TO THE MCRA

A person can argue all day about the methodology used, the accuracy of use figures, etc., but no matter how the financial situation in recreation on the Pocatello Ranger District is evaluated, it is not good. This is especially true since this chart indicates the situation in 1985. In 1986, the Pocatello Ranger District's recreation budget went down again 22% which is not reflected in this table. If use remains the same in 1986 as in 1985, it would bring the money available per RVD down to 16 cents. This occurred in spite of the fact that the money going to all regions in recreation was the same in 1986 as in 1985 (61).

This is a roundabout way of saying that any proposal costing additional money contained in this paper, will be impossible to implement unless additional funding is found, or another recreation management activity is foregone on the District.

FOREST LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN DIRECTION

As previously discussed, all the land northwest of Bannock Highway is in the Mink Creek Recreation Area Special Management Unit. Although within this special management unit there are other intensive management lands, i.e., range, municipal watershed and Research Natural Area withdrawal, the overall emphasis for this special area is recreation management.

Southeast of Bannock Highway there are a variety of management prescriptions that occur. (See the following maps.) These include; intensive semiprimitive recreation, range, timber, and semiprimitive recreation/timber management.

The following table shows the breakdown of the various management prescriptions within the MCRA:

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS	0-1/2 MILE (A)	1/2-3 MILES (B)	3+ MILES (C)	ACREAGE TOTALS
Semiprimitive Recreation		19,307	3,071	22,378
Semiprimitive Rec./Timber (A)			44	44
Research Natural Areas		2,850		2,850
Fish & Wildlife Habitat	138			
Fish & Wildlife Habitat/Range	1,067			1,067
Range	3,536	2,161	344	6,041
Timber	611	980		1,591
Timber Non-Intensive		1,488	972	2,460
Energy	(95% of All Lands are Under Lease)			
Minimum Level (B)	4,639	5,489	925	11,053

- (A) Semiprimitive Recreation emphasis shared with timber. Three-stage shelterwood timber harvest practices are included in the management prescription to accommodate the level of harvest determined compatible with Semiprimitive Recreation.
- (B) Minimum Level Management includes those areas that have a non-intensive prescription applied to them.

Direction and Needs as Identified by the Forest Land and Resource Plan

1. Encourage a more even distribution of various uses.
2. Develop more parking facilities at trailheads and heavy use areas.
3. Develop more trailhead facilities.
4. Continue emphasis on special management concerns including off-road vehicle management.

COMPATIBILITY OF RECREATION WITH OTHER MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

The "Plan" identifies the compatibility of the various resource elements with one another. These are measured on a scale between one and ten with the higher number reflecting the higher compatibility. These ratings are: 8-9 = Very High, 6-7 = High, 4-5 = Moderate, 2-3 = Low and 0-1 = Very Low.

The following chart shows the compatibility between Semiprimitive Recreation and Roaded Natural Recreation with other resource element prescriptions found in the MCRA when the other resource elements are the emphasis:

Compatibility Chart





RESOURCE ELEMENT	SEMI-PRIMITIVE RECREATION	ROADED NATURAL RECREATION
Research Natural Areas	Non-Motorized (8) Motorized (4)	(0) (0)
Fish Habitat Mgmt. Wildlife Habitat Mgmt.	Non-Motorized (8) Motorized (7)	(6) (6)
Range Mgmt. (Sheep)	Non-Motorized (5) Motorized (7)	(7) (7)
Range Mgmt. (Cattle)	Non-Motorized (8) Motorized (9)	(9) (9)
Municipal Watershed	Non-Motorized (7) Motorized (7)	(9) (9)
Timber Mgmt. (Clearcutting)	Non-Motorized (1) Motorized (1)	(5) (5)
Timber Mgmt. (Partial Cutting)	Non-Motorized (5) Motorized (5)	(8) (8)

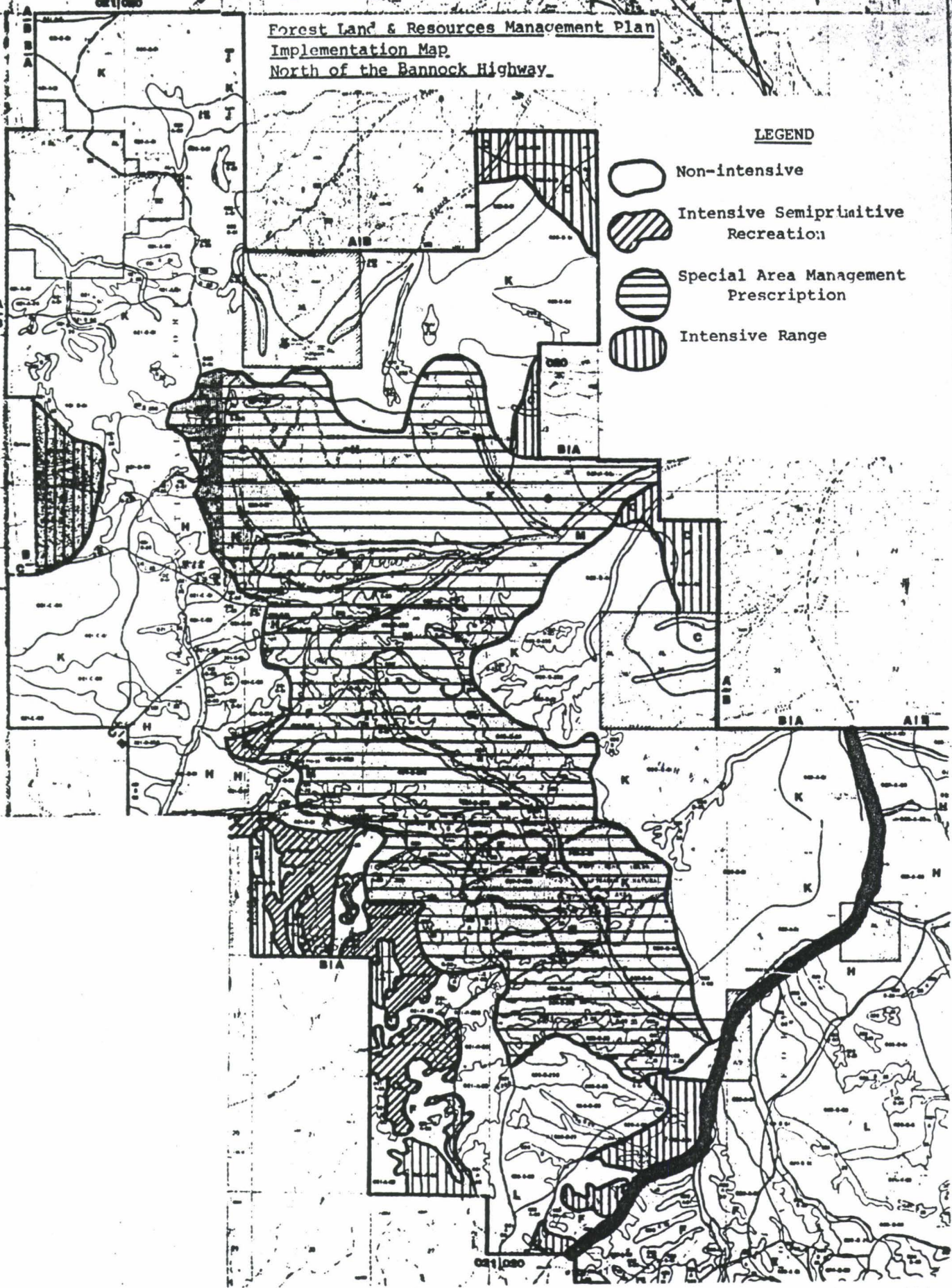
BOTTOM LINE - Any proposal for recreation management must be compatible with the emphasized resource prescription within the MCRA. If it is not, the "Plan" will either have to be amended or the proposal will have to wait for the next update of the "Plan". (The following two pages are of the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Implementation Maps.)

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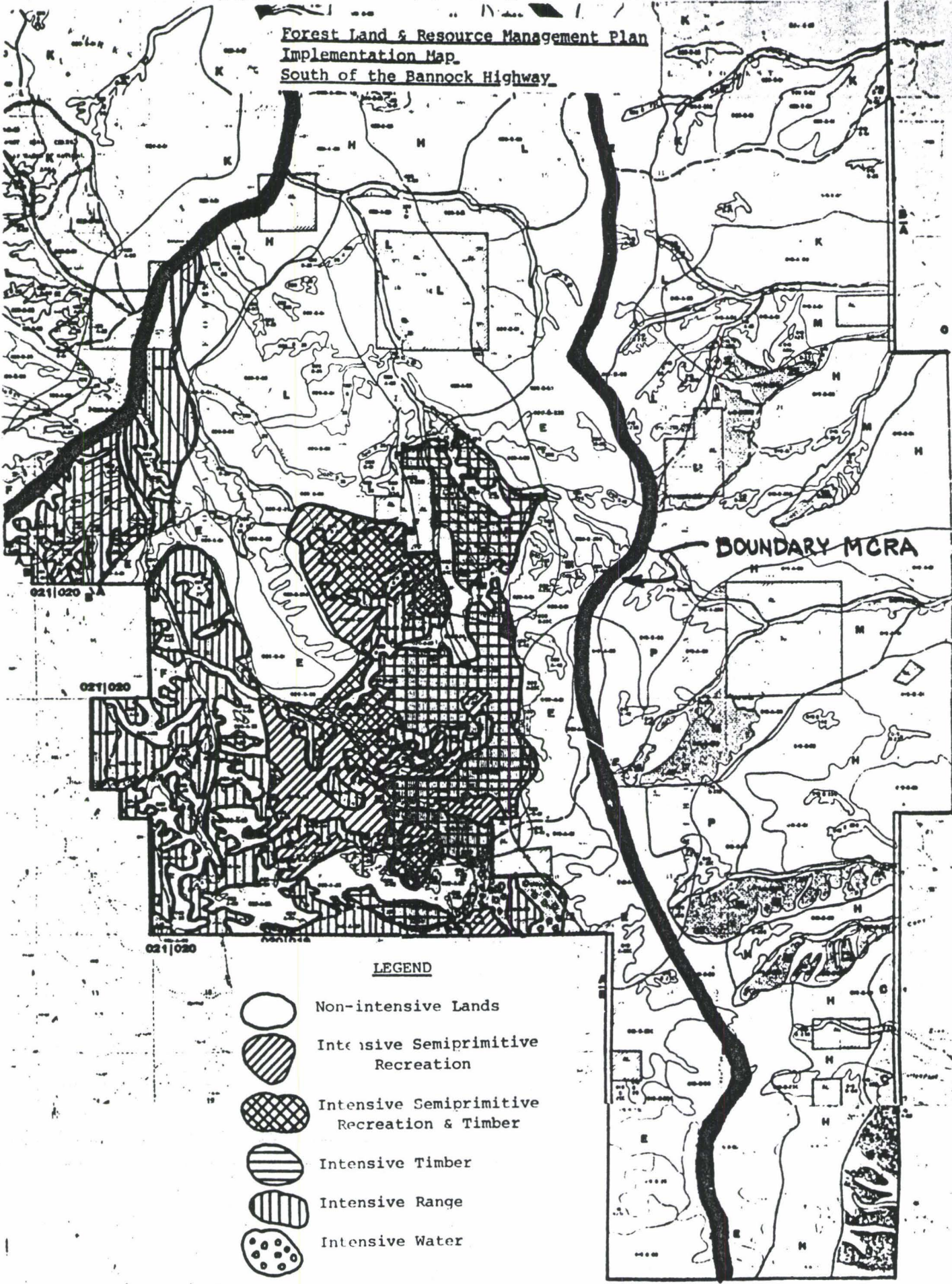
Forest Land & Resources Management Plan
Implementation Map
North of the Bannock Highway.

LEGEND







-  Non-intensive
-  Intensive Semiprimitive Recreation
-  Special Area Management Prescription
-  Intensive Range



Forest Land & Resource Management Plan
Implementation Map
South of the Bannock Highway



LEGEND

-  Non-intensive Lands
-  Intensive Semiprimitive Recreation
-  Intensive Semiprimitive Recreation & Timber
-  Intensive Timber
-  Intensive Range
-  Intensive Water

RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM

Twenty-three percent of the lands in the MCRA are classified "Roaded Natural Recreation" with approximately 30% classified "Semiprimitive Non-Motorized" and the remaining 57% in "Semiprimitive Motorized".

With the exception of the Bannock Highway and the East Mink Creek Road, the majority of the roaded natural areas would be more accurately described by the Pacific Northwest Region's Roaded Natural Classification of "Roaded Modified". This is because the majority of the roaded natural area is more primitive than the typical roaded natural area.

IV. USER SURVEYS

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1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 26

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7. How long do you usually travel to an area in the CNF to participate in your type of outdoor recreation activity?

71% 1 hour or less 26% between 1-2 hours 3% 3 hours or more

8. Could you give me an idea of what types of outdoor equipment you own (such as cross-country skis, snowmobiles, etc.)?

<u>61%</u> cross-country skis	<u>8%</u> horses
<u>72%</u> bicycle	<u>34%</u> trail bike
<u>4%</u> snowshoes	<u>41%</u> 4-wheel drive vehicles
<u>36%</u> backpacks	<u>21%</u> campers
<u>36%</u> snowmachines	<u>26%</u> other

9. In which of these four categories would you say your income is included:

6% less than 10,000 29% 10,000-15,000 43% 15,000-20,000
16% over 20,000 6% no response

10. Are you single or married? 36% single 64% married

11. 65% male 35% female

12. Could you tell me your age? 12% under 20 36% 20-30
 28% 30-40 21% over 40
 3% no response

1985 Telephone Survey

In December of 1985 as part of this study, four Career Based Education classes at Pocatello High School conducted another phone survey based on the original one done by Idaho State University. The following are the changes made to the Idaho State survey before conducting this survey: 1) In order to add clarity to some questions, wording was changed. 2) Some assumptions being made with regards to the knowledge of the person being interviewed, were dropped. 3) Six additional use areas within the MCRA that were not identified on the ISU survey were added. 4) Five additional recreation activities were added to this survey. 5) All questions with regards to sex, age, income and marital status were dropped. 6) Since this study is not only concerned with the present status of the MCRA but also the future trend for the area, a question was asked about recreation activities that the person being interviewed might be discontinuing in the next five years, and what they might anticipate taking up within the next five years. In a strict scientific polling census, the two surveys are not identical. The 1985 survey was based on the original Idaho State University survey, however, and is close enough so that the results can be compared for the purposes of this study.

The phone survey was strictly a random survey without any knowledge of who the person was being interviewed. Its purpose was to get a sense of what the general public's knowledge, experience, use concerns and future activities may be.

It should be noted that some activities may be underrepresented. This is because there are approximately 5,000 students that attend Idaho State University adjacent to the MCRA. Many of these students may not have telephones so a representative number of them may not show up on a random phone survey.

The Pocatello High School students contacted 210 people, and 178 or 85% of them identified themselves as outdoor recreationists and were willing to be interviewed. The following is a summary of that interview:

1. Do you consider yourself an outdoor recreation enthusiast/participant?

178 Yes 29 No
(85%) (14%)

3 No Response
(1%)

(If no, say thank you very much for your time this evening. Since we are specifically interested in outdoor recreation we do not need to go any further.)

2. What types of recreation activities do you participate in:

Mechanized (4-wheeling, snowmobiling, etc.) Non-mechanized (backpacking, cross-country skiing, etc.)
or both.

11 Mechanized
(6%)

47 Non-mechanized
(27%)

120 Both
(67%)

3. On the Pocatello Ranger District there are areas that are popular for different types of recreation activities. Are you familiar with any of the following areas?

157 Pebble Creek*
(88%)

69 Box Canyon
(39%)

75 Lead Draw
(42%)

86 Toponce*
(48%)

114 West Fork Mink Creek
(64%)

27 Valve House
(15%)

61 Robbers Roost*
(34%)

99 Gibson Jack
(56%)

23 Porcelain Pot
(13%)

75 Inman Canyon*
(42%)

66 Elk Meadows
(37%)

107 Cherry Springs
(60%)

66 Haystack Mtn.*
(37%)

32 Corral Creek
(18%)

121 S. Fork Mink Cr.
(68%)

51 Walker Creek*
(29%)

159 Scout Mountain
(89%)

36 Slate Mountain
(20%)

61 Buckskin Meadow*
(46%)

50 Crystal Summit
(28%)

2 Slate Creek
(1%)

*Indicates an area outside of the MCRA.

4. Would you like to see more areas in the Caribou National Forest developed for recreational use?

99 Yes
(51%)

54 No
(28%)

40 No response
(21%)

If yes: What type of use?

Archery
ATV Trails
Backpacking
Bicycling
Boating
Campsites
Cross-country Skiing
Fishing

Hiding place to get away from people
Hiking
Hunting
More Motorized
Motorcycling
Mountain Bike Course
Non-Mechanized
Picnic Areas
Picnic and Camping
Skiing
Snowmobile Trails
Wilderness

Additional Comments:

Develop more recreation except for 4-wheel drive vehicles
Place to party where cops won't get you
Reopen trails that the Forest Service has closed
Yes, but no damage to environment

Where would you like these activities developed?

Backpacking:	Near Crystal Summit Mink Creek Area
Bicycling:	Near Crystal Summit
Camping:	Walker Creek "No Reservations" - West Fork and Cherry Springs
Campsites:	Cherry Springs Crystal Summit Mink Creek

Cherry Springs

Cross-Country Skiing:	Farther Back Mink Creek Area Pebble
Designated Trails:	Gibson Jack
Downhill Skiing:	Scout Mountain
Biking, Hiking and Hunting:	East of Pocatello
Horseback Riding:	South Fork
Horseback Trails:	Gibson Jack
Motorcycle Trails:	Scout Mountain
Non-Motorized:	Mink Creek
ORV:	Scout Mountain
Picnicking:	Cherry Springs Gibson Jack
Scout Mountain	
Snowmobiling:	Scout Mountain South Fork Off-Forest

5. Do you think the Caribou National Forest should have areas designated for specific uses such as:

A designated area for motorized use only: 126 Yes 42 No 16 No Response
(69%) (23%) (8%)

A designated area for non-motorized use: 132 Yes 34 No 12 No Response
(74%) (19%) (7%)

6. Is there a specific type of use/uses you would recommend this for and where?

Alpine skiing on mtn. across from Pebble Creek
(Indian or Scout Mtn.)

ATV Trails

3-wheel drive on Scout Mountain

Bow-Hunt - Mink Creek

Cleanup Cherry Springs Area

Cross-Country Skiing: Box Canyon
Elk Meadows
Mink Creek
Valve House
West Fork

Gibson Jack

Horses - South Fork of Mink Creek

Ice Skating

More backpacking, hiking and camping

Mountain bike course from Scout Mtn. to Lead Draw

Moto-Cross Track

Motorcycles - Cherry Springs, Elk Meadows and Valve House

Motorized Everywhere (Particularly, Scout Mountain)

Motorized to the base of mountains - Non-Motorized from there

Non-Motorized - Cherry Springs

No Motorcycle Trails

Non-Motorized Trails

No cross-country skiers in snowmobile areas and vice versa

No snowmobiling at Pebble Creek Ski Area

Separate or remove horse use from trails

Snowmobile Trails

7. Is there any place in particular on the Caribou National Forest you would recommend a change in recreation management?

35 Yes
(18%)

112 No
(56%)

52 No Response
(26%)

Where?

Amphitheater - Scout Mountain
Archery elk hunt in Unit 70 (Scout Mountain)
Box Canyon
Campground
Cherry Springs (Back to a picnic area)
Cherry Springs (Hunting)
Elk Meadows (Allow dogs with owners)
Justice Park
Mink Creek Area
Scout Mountain
Slate Mountain
South Mink
West Fork of Mink Creek
Reduce motorcycle use to protect watershed.
Remove all livestock from the Forest.
Restrict snowmachines and motorcycles.

8. How long do you usually travel to an area in the Caribou National Forest to participate in your type of outdoor recreation activity?

78 (1 hr. or less) 47 (between 1 or 2 hrs.) 53 (3 hrs. or more)
(43%) (26%) (29%)

2 (No Response)
(1%)

9. Which of the following outdoor equipment do you use?

76 Cross-Country Skis
(42%)

80 Horses
(45%)

75 Downhill Skis
(42%)

85 Bicycles (Street)
(47%)

69 Trail Bike (Motorized)
(39%)

35 Canoe
(20%)

30 Snowshoes
(17%)

98 4-wheel Drive Vehicles
(55%)

19 Kayak
(11%)

118 Backpacks
(66%)

56 3- & 4-wheel ATV's
(32%)

81 Shotgun
(46%)

28 Mountain Bike
(16%) (Non-Motorized)

96 Snowmobile
(54%)

102 Rifle
(57%) (Hunting)

The following items were mentioned, but were not on the survey:

6 Fishing Equipment

1 Boating

2 Archery

1 Black Powder

2 Rafting

10. Is there a recreation activity you do not participate in now but are thinking of trying within the next five years?

95 Yes
(53%)

61 No
(34%)

24 No Response
(13%)

What would this activity be?

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>NO. OF RESPONSES</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Alpine Skiing	19	9%
Archery	4	2%
ATV's (3- & 4-Wheel)	3	1%
Backpacking	3	1%
Canoeing	4	2%
Drinking	4	2%
Hang-Gliding	1	.5%
Horseback Riding	9	4%
Hunting	3	1%
Kayaking	12	6%
Mountain Biking	3	1%
Mountain Climbing	2	1%
Nordic Skiing	24	11%
Polo	1	.5%
Rafting	2	1%
Target Shooting	1	.5%
Skydiving	2	1%
Snow Boarding	3	1%
Snowmobiling	9	4%
Snowshoeing	6	3%
Trail Biking (Motorized)	2	1%
Waterskiing	2	1%
4-Wheeling	4	2%

11. Is there any recreation activity you are presently doing that you anticipate discontinuing within the next five years?

26 Yes
(15%)

134 No
(77%)

15 No Response
(8%)

What would this activity be?

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>NO. OF RESPONSES</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Alpine Skiing	5	2%
Backpacking	4	2%
Bicycling (Street)	1	.5%
Nordic Skiing	3	1%
Hunting	4	2%
Kayaking	3	1%
Running	2	1%
Softball	1	.5%
Snowmobiling	4	2%
Trail Biking (Motorized)	4	2%
4-Wheeling	1	.5%

NOTE: Several areas that were mentioned by respondents were deleted from this summary since they are not within the Caribou National Forest.

Translating Survey Information Into Outdoor Recreationists Numbers

Within 20 miles of the MCRA, there are 75,000 people living. Using data from "Population and Employment Forecast - State of Idaho" by R. Meale and J. Weeks, it can be determined that 38,129 of these people are between the ages of 15 and 54. It is this number that was used in conjunction with the statistics generated from the telephone survey to discuss the user population and trends. Eighty-five percent of the survey respondents said they are outdoor recreationists. Expanding this survey to the adjacent population base would mean that there are 32,410 outdoor recreationists living adjacent to the MCRA.

Of the 32,410 outdoor recreationists living adjacent to the MCRA, 1,945 of them participate in motorized recreation, 8,751 in non-motorized recreation and 21,715 in both motorized and non-motorized recreation.

The following numbers represent the number of people who can be expected to use the areas listed below within the MCRA:

<u>12,640</u>	Box Canyon	<u>13,612</u>	Lead Draw
<u>20,742</u>	West Fork of Mink Creek	<u>4,871</u>	Valve House
<u>18,149</u>	Gibson Jack	<u>4,213</u>	Porcelain Pot
<u>11,992</u>	Elk Meadows	<u>19,446</u>	Cherry Springs
<u>5,834</u>	Corral Creek	<u>22,039</u>	S. Fork Mink Creek
<u>28,845</u>	Scout Mountain	<u>6,482</u>	Slate Mountain
<u>9,075</u>	Crystal Summit		

There are 13,936 outdoor recreationists who are only willing to travel one hour or less to participate in their recreational activities. This means that many will probably spend much of their recreation time on the Pocatello Ranger District.

Adjacent to the MCRA, there are the following number of recreationists:

<u>13,612</u>	Cross-Country Skiers	<u>14,585</u>	Horseback Riders
<u>15,233</u>	Bicyclists (Street)	<u>12,640</u>	Trail Bike Riders
<u>5,510</u>	Showshoe Users	<u>17,825</u>	4-Wheel Drive Users
<u>21,390</u>	Backpackers	<u>10,371</u>	3- & 4- Wheel ATV Users
<u>5,186</u>	Mountain Bike Riders	<u>17,501</u>	Snowmobilers
<u>13,612</u>	Downhill Skiers	<u>14,908</u>	Shotgun Users
<u>18,474</u>	Rifle Users (Hunting)		

Other than the RIM Use counts, what is not known is how often they participate in each of these activities.

One of the important things that was learned from the survey, is what the future trends for outdoor recreation within the MCRA are. This is discussed in the next chapter.

A COMPARISON OF THE 1980 and 1985 TELEPHONE SURVEYS

Both surveys asked whether or not the persons being interviewed considered themselves outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Apparently in the 1980 survey, they did not keep track of the number of people who did not consider themselves outdoor recreationists or did not answer this question. For this reason, no comparison can be made on this first question.

The second question asked what type of recreationist they were; mechanized, non-mechanized, or both. There was a significant shift in this question from 1980 to 1985.

1980	<u>31%</u> Mechanized	<u>54%</u> Non-Mechanized	<u>15%</u> Both
1985	<u>6%</u> Mechanized	<u>27%</u> Non-Mechanized	<u>67%</u> Both

At first glance, it would appear that there has been a shift from either mechanized or non-mechanized recreationist to a recreationist who participates in both types of recreational activities. To a certain extent this is probably true. This question, however, tended to evoke a response on how some perceived themselves as opposed to what they did in reality.

For example, thirty individuals on Question 9 (where they indicate what type of recreation equipment they use) contradicted themselves in Question 1. Twelve people said they considered themselves non-mechanized recreationists when in reality they all used snowmobiles along with non-mechanized equipment. Thirteen individuals said they were "mechanized" recreationists when in reality they indicated in question 9 they also used equipment such as cross-country skis which also shifted them into the "both" column. It is not known if any adjustments were made in the 1980 survey for these types of contradictions.

Questions 3 & 4 from the 1980 survey were combined into one question on the 1985 survey. This question asked what areas people were familiar with on the Pocatello Ranger District and listed some areas. On the 1985 survey, the same list was used as in 1980 with the exception of dropping one location that was not on the National Forest, correction on the name of an area and adding additional areas that were not mentioned on the original list.

1980 SURVEY

18% Pebble Creek
4% Toponce Creek
6% Robbers Roost
2% Inman Creek
8% Haystack Creek
6% Walker Creek
26% South Mink Creek
10% Box Canyon
1% Kinport Mountain
41% West Fork Mink Creek
16% Gibson Jack
18% Elk Meadows
26% Corral Creek
52% Scout Mountain
3% Lead Draw
* Valve House Draw
* Buckskin Meadows
* Crystal Summit
* Porcelain Pot Gulch
* Cherry Springs
* Slate Mountain

1985 SURVEY

88% Pebble Creek
48% Toponce Creek
34% Robbers Roost
42% Inman Canyon
37% Haystack Mountain
29% Walker Creek
68% South Mink Creek
39% Box Canyon
Not on National Forest
64% West Fork Mink Creek
56% Gibson Jack
37% Elk Meadows
18% Corral Creek
89% Scout Mountain
42% Lead Draw
15% Valve House Draw
46% Buckskin Meadows
28% Crystal Summit
13% Porcelain Pot Gulch
60% Cherry Springs
20% Slate Mountain

*Indicates an area not on the 1980 survey.

NOTE: Slate Creek was not mentioned on either survey, but one percent of the respondents volunteered that they used this area.

It is clear that there has been a dramatic increase in awareness of the different areas that make up significant portions of the Pocatello Ranger District. This, interestingly enough, is in the same proportion as the growth in recreation use over the same time period. This would tend to help to substantiate the accuracy of these two separate documents.

There was not a significant change in the response to the question asking if they would like to see more of the Caribou National Forest developed for recreation use.

1980	<u>62%</u> Yes	<u>36%</u> No	<u>2%</u> No Response
1985	<u>51%</u> Yes	<u>28%</u> No	<u>21%</u> No Response

Several people took this opportunity to say they did not want more areas developed for recreation because they wanted to see more wilderness areas.

To the question asking whether or not there should be areas designated for specific uses only, there was an increase in the 1985 survey of the percentage of people wanting more of a zoning for uses.

A designated area for motorized use only:

1980	<u>51%</u> Yes	<u>47%</u> No	<u>2%</u> No Response
1985	<u>69%</u> Yes	<u>23%</u> No	<u>8%</u> No Response

A designated area for non-motorized use:

1980	<u>66%</u> Yes	<u>31%</u> No	<u>3%</u> No Response
1985	<u>74%</u> Yes	<u>19%</u> No	<u>7%</u> No Response

Peoples' willingness to travel various distances has appeared to change. This may be the result of falling gas prices or some other factor. The response to "How long are you willing to travel on the Caribou National Forest to participate in your outdoor recreation activity?" was as follows:

1980	<u>71%</u> (1 hr. or less)	<u>26%</u> (between 1-2 hrs.)	<u>3%</u> (3 hrs. or more)
1985	<u>43%</u> (1 hr. or less)	<u>26%</u> (between 1-2 hrs.)	<u>29%</u> (3 hrs. or more)

The majority of users are still only willing to travel one hour or less which would get them anywhere in the MCRA.

On the 1985 survey, all of the same recreation equipment was listed under the question "What types of recreation equipment do you use?" With the exception of campers since this was not considered needed information for the scope of this paper, there were some additional types of recreation equipment added to the 1985 survey. Both surveys contained a serious error in excluding several types of recreation equipment including: Fishing, black powder and archery equipment.

1980

72% Bicycle (Street)
4% Snowshoes
36% Backpacks
8% Horses
34% Trail Bike (Motorized)
41% 4-Wheel Drive Vehicle
26% Other
* Mtn. Bike (Non-Motorized)
* 3-& 4-Wheel ATV's
36% Snowmobiles
61% Nordic Skis
* Alpine Skis
* Canoe
* Kayak
* Shotgun
* Rifle (Hunting)

1985

47% Bicycle (Street)
17% Snowshoes
66% Backpacks
45% Horses
39% Trail Bike (Motorized)
55% 4-Wheel Drive Vehicle
* Other
16% Mtn. Bike (Non-Motorized)
32% 3-& 4-Wheel ATV's
54% Snowmobiles
42% Nordic Skis
42% Alpine Skis
20% Canoe
11% Kayak
46% Shotgun
57% Rifle (Hunting)

*Not listed on the survey.

There were other questions asked on both surveys, but they were not common to either survey.

"1985" MAILED SURVEY

A second mailed survey was sent out to 75 individuals who were known to have some sort of connection to the MCRA. Fifty-three of these individuals, or 68% responded. The rest used the stamp off of the self-addressed stamped envelope to mail a Christmas card.

An attempt was made to get a cross-section of people who had some interest or were otherwise affected by activities within the MCRA. Not wishing to stereotype humans (but doing so anyway) the following is a list of the special interests or backgrounds of the people who were sent surveys: Adjacent land-owners, "general forest users", representatives of Camp Taylor/Campfire Youth Camp, Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho State Fish and Game Conservation Officers, Idaho State University Outdoor Program Instructors and Directors, outfitter and guide special use permittee, former USFS Recreation Guards, State Representative, Bannock-Shoshone Tribal Attorney, owners of two different outdoor recreation equipment stores, State of Idaho Off-Road Vehicle Coordinator, State of Idaho Trails Coordinator, range permittees, State of Idaho Department of Transportation, Equestrian Club Representative, adjacent ranch/farm owners, Idaho State University Plant Ecologist, President of Environmental Education Association of Southeast Idaho, President of the Portneuf Valley Audubon Society, trail bike enthusiast, loggers, Director of the Outdoor Recreation Program for the City of Pocatello's Parks and Recreation Department, snowmobile enthusiasts, former President of the Idaho Trail Machine Association, President of the Southeast Idaho Chapter of the Sierra Club, former Professor of Outdoor Recreation at Idaho State University, Water Superintendent for the City of Pocatello, President of the Bannock County Snowmobile Association, Idaho Falls Trails Machine Association, Director and Members of the Cooperative Wilderness Handicapped Outdoor Group, summer home permittees, firewood cutters, people who were cited with a ORV Violation Notice, executive from the Tendoy Boy Scout Council.

"1985" MAIL SURVEY SUMMARY

December 5, 1985

Dear

In the past you have shown an interest in the management of resources in the area of the Pocatello Ranger District that drains into Mink Creek. (See attached map.) Presently, I am in the process of doing a research paper on possible ways of improving recreation management in the Mink Creek area for Clemson University.

If you would take a few minutes to answer the following questions it would be of great help to me.

1. Please check any recreation activities you participate in within the Mink Creek area. Also, please indicate at what location/s you do this activity.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location/s</u>
<u>17</u> Big Game Hunting	Box Canyon, Dry Creek, Garden Creek, Gibson Jack Creek, Mink Creek area, Old Tom Mtn. area, Scout Mountain, Slate Mountain, South Fork area, Valve House Draw and West Mink.
<u>24</u> Nordic Skiing	Box Canyon, Cherry Springs, Chimney Creek, City Creek, Corral Creek, Crystal Summit, East Fork, Kinney Creek, Lead Draw, Mink Creek area, Porcelain Pot, Scout Mountain, South Fork, Valve House, and West Fork.
<u>34</u> Driving for Pleasure	Box Canyon, Cherry Springs, Crystal Summit, East Fork, Mink Creek, Scout Mountain Road Slate Mountain, and South Fork.
<u>32</u> Hiking	Blind Springs Creek, Box Canyon, Cherry Springs, City Creek, Corral Creek, Crystal Creek, Crystal Summit, Cusick Creek, Dry Creek, Dry Fork of Gibson Jack, Elk Meadows, Gibson Jack, Kinney Creek, Lead Draw, Mink Creek area, Monument Gulch, Porcelain Pot, Scout Mountain, Slate Mountain, Trail Creek, Valve House and West Fork.
<u>11</u> Trail Bike Riding	Bell Marsh, Box Canyon, Chimney Creek, City Creek, Corral Creek, Crestline Trail, East Fork, Elk Meadows, Gibson Jack to Pole Canyon, Lead Draw, Midnight, Monument Gulch, Mormon Canyon, Scout Mountain, Scout Mountain Road, Slate Mountain Trail, South Fork Road, Trail Creek, and Valve House.
<u>21</u> Bird Watching	Cherry Springs, East Fork, Kinney Creek, Mink Creek, Scout Mountain, South Fork, and West Fork.
<u>19</u> Fishing	Cherry Springs, Garden Creek, Gibson Jack, Mink Creek, South Fork and West Fork.
<u>5</u> Mtn. Bicycle Riding (Non-Motorized)	Box Canyon, City Creek, Crestline Trail, Crystal Summit to Corral Creek and Cusick Creek.
<u>9</u> Bicycling (Paved Roads)	Crystal (loop), Crystal Summit, East Fork, Mink Creek, and Scout Mountain.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <u>10</u> 4-Wheel Drive Use | Crystal, East Fork, Hunting and Fuelwood Gathering areas, Old Tom Mountain area, South Fork, Scout Mountain and Scout Mountain Road. |
| <u>17</u> Environmental Education/Study | Box Canyon, Cherry Springs Nature Area, Crystal Summit, East Fork, Gibson Jack, Kinney Creek, Lead Draw, Scout Mountain Road, South Fork, and West Fork. |
| <u>19</u> Upland Bird Hunting | Dox Canyon, Clifton Creek, Corral Creek, Crystal Creek, East Fork, Elk Meadows, Gibson Jack, Kinney Creek, Porcelain Pot Gulch, Scout Mountain, South Fork, Trail Creek, Valve House, and West Fork. |
| <u>8</u> Horseback Riding | Kinport, Elk Meadows, West Mink Creek, various rough isolated drainages and most of the area shown on the map. |
| <u>9</u> Snowmobiling | East Fork, Elk Meadows, Scout Mountain, South Fork, and entire area (except for closed areas). |
| <u>3</u> 3- & 4- Wheel ATV's | Elk Meadows, Scout Mountain, South Fork, and entire area where allowed. |
| <u>2</u> Rock Climbing | South Fork of Mink Creek, and Foltz Property. |
| <u>20</u> Photography | Beaver ponds on the road to Crystal Summit, Box Canyon, Cherry Springs, East Fork, Gibson Jack, Kinney Creek, Mink Creek, Scout Mountain, South Fork, West Fork and entire area. |
| <u>16</u> Dispersed Camping | East Fork Mink Creek Trail, Elk Meadows, Kinney Creek, Old Tom Mountain area, Old Youth Campsite, Scout Mountain, on top of Scout Mountain, South Fork and Upper Valve House. |
| <u>15</u> Dispersed Picnicking | Corral Creek, Crystal Summit, Scout Mountain, South Fork and West Fork. |
| <u>23</u> Camping at Justice Park | Scout Mountain Campground and Scout Mountain Amphitheater. |
| <u>23</u> Picnicking at Justice Park
(Scout Mountain Picnic Area) | |
| <u>14</u> Gathering Firewood | Box Canyon, Bull Canyon, Crystal area, Mink Creek, Scout Mountain and South Fork. |

6 Gathering Other
Forest Products

Cherry Springs (chokecherries), East Fork, around Scout Mountain Amphitheater and campground (elderberries), and South Fork.

4 Other

Beaver observation at Box Canyon and Crystal Summit. Feeding of game birds and deer in the winter at East Fork of Mink Creek. Showshoe at East Fork and South Fork of Mink Creek. Target shoot at Lead Draw and South Fork of Mink Creek. Snow Tubing (Entire Area)

Do you feel the Mink Creek Area should be zoned into special or restricted recreation uses? (An example would be closing an area to a certain type of use.)

27 Yes

13 No

4 No Response

If you do, on the attached map please roughly draw lines around areas where restrictive or special management should occur and what it should be. (This may include special trail designations.)

Please Note: Since Congress designates wilderness areas which automatically dictates the management of an area, please do not include wilderness management.

Please list any area or areas where you feel there are conflicts between two or more uses. (They do not have to be between recreation uses.) Also, what those conflicts are. If you feel that there are no conflicts, what would you do to reduce them?

Conflict: 1 No camping along road to Justice Park. There are keggers and father/son outings. Need restrooms if camping is allowed.

Solution: 1 Recreation areas away from motorized vehicles, radios, and T.V. Also, portable toilets.

Conflict: 2 (a) Lead Draw - ORV's and parties vs. family picnicking/camping and aesthetics.

(b) Scout Mtn. Campground - Campers/picnickers paying fees vs. non-paying campers/picnickers.

(c) All areas - Motorized bikes/ATV's vs. hikers (Especially ATV's passing hikers on trails not wide enough for ATV use.)

Solution: 2 (a) Restrict Lead Draw to either ORV use or no ORV use with stricter enforcement.

(b) Strict enforcement of campground fee or abolish the fee.

(c) Either restrict ATV use on trails or make trails to accommodate them.

Conflict: 3 Camping spots are overrun by cattle.

Solution: 3 Fence areas for picnicking and camping. Cattle gates should be replaced by cattleguards with gates to the side since gates are hard to open and close.

Conflict: 4 Crystal Summit - Snowmachines and cross-country skiers.

Solution: 4 Limit snowmachine use to the first and last weekends each month in this area.

Conflict: 5 Cattle use along streams is in excess and conflicts with camping, fishing, picnicking and general public uses. Especially on East Fork of Mink Creek.

Solution: 5 Limit the areas where cattle can graze.

Conflict: 6 Presence of domestic livestock in camping and picnic areas conflicts with the recreation use of these areas.

Solution: 6 Make fence maintenance and restriction of livestock from designated camping/picnic areas the responsibility of the permittee and enforce it.

Conflict: 7 Open range cattle grazing interferes with cleanliness for camping, picnicking and hikers.

Solution: 7 Propose areas for cattle exclusion. (See attached map.)
NOTE: Areas proposed are not on National Forest Land.

Conflict: 8 In the summer, there are too many cattle at lower elevations on East Fork. One-half mile south of Lead Draw the cattle concentrate in a small meadow along the creek, causing severe damage to vegetation, stream and the stream bank.

Solution: 8 Reduce the number of cattle, and have the Range Rider move the cattle out of this area on a regular basis.

Conflict: 9 (a) Cattle grazing vs. hiking, biking and birding.
(The whole drainage.)

(b) Aspen cutting and possible blue bird trail.

Solution: 9 Cows moved to another allotment.

Conflict: 10 Crystal Summit area between snowmobiles and skiers.

Solution: 10 Close Crystal Summit to snowmobiles.

Conflict: 11 Elk Meadows and Gibson Jack area - Hikers and cross-country
vs. snowmobile and trail machine users.

Solution: 11 Separate mechanized from foot, horse and ski travel by
putting machines where existing dirt roads can handle them
(Kinport Area).

Conflict: 12 Elk Meadows - Conflict exists between cross-country skiers
and snowmobiles in regards to use of trails in winter time.
Conflict between environmentalists and motorcycles, ATV's and
4-wheeler groups.

Solution: 12 Due to the fact the problem only involves Crystal Summit
to about three miles in toward Elk Meadows, I would
establish two trails. Or, better yet, the two conflicting
groups could use one trail if there was some compromising
on both sides.

Conflict: 13 (a) Gibson Jack Creek - Hiking vs. motorcycles.

(b) Crystal Summit - Snowmobiling vs. cross-country skiing.

(c) Justice Park - Too many simultaneous uses.

Solution: 13 (a) Construct an exterior trail bike trail system (as
outlined by Rep. Stallings) Leave the interior to
hikers and horses. Put the jeep road to Elk Meadows
to bed (not just closed) beginning at Crystal Creek.

(b) Construct a separate ski trail at Crystal Summit.

Conflict: 14 (a) Motorized vehicles vs. self-propelled.

(b) Trail bikes vs hikers.

(c) Snowmachines vs. skiers.

- Conflict: 9 (a) Cattle grazing vs. hiking, biking and birding.
(The whole drainage.)
- (b) Aspen cutting and possible blue bird trail.
- Solution: 9 Cows moved to another allotment.
- Conflict: 10 Crystal Summit area between snowmobiles and skiers.
- Solution: 10 Close Crystal Summit to snowmobiles.
- Conflict: 11 Elk Meadows and Gibson Jack area - Hikers and cross-country vs. snowmobile and trail machine users.
- Solution: 11 Separate mechanized from foot, horse and ski travel by putting machines where existing dirt roads can handle them (Kinport Area).
- Conflict: 12 Elk Meadows - Conflict exists between cross-country skiers and snowmobiles in regards to use of trails in winter time. Conflict between environmentalists and motorcycles, ATV's and 4-wheeler groups.
- Solution: 12 Due to the fact the problem only involves Crystal Summit to about three miles in toward Elk Meadows, I would establish two trails. Or, better yet, the two conflicting groups could use one trail if there was some compromising on both sides.
- Conflict: 13 (a) Gibson Jack Creek - Hiking vs. motorcycles.
- (b) Crystal Summit - Snowmobiling vs. cross-country skiing.
- (c) Justice Park - Too many simultaneous uses.
- Solution: 13 (a) Construct an exterior trail bike trail system (as outlined by Rep. Stallings) Leave the interior to hikers and horses. Put the jeep road to Elk Meadows to bed (not just closed) beginning at Crystal Creek.
- (b) Construct a separate ski trail at Crystal Summit.
- Conflict: 14 (a) Motorized vehicles vs. self-propelled.
- (b) Trail bikes vs hikers.
- (c) Snowmachines vs. skiers.

- Solution: 14 Develop more non-motorized areas.
- Conflict: 15 Motorized and non-motorized use in some areas.
- Solution: 15 Eliminate some non-motorized use in conflict areas.
- Conflict: 16 Designated ski trails and dogs.
- Solution: 16 Have dogs prohibited from designated ski trails.
- Conflict: 17 Snowmobiles vs. cross-country skiers.
- Solution: 17 Have separate areas (zoned) in particular, the Park 'N' Ski areas.
- Conflict: 18 Motorized and non-motorized.
- Solution: 18 Zoning areas for conflicting uses would minimize effects. Share trails where conflicts exist. For example, allow motorized use on odd days and non-motorized use on even days.
- Conflict: 19 Lead Draw area has a conflict in winter months between motorized vehicles and heavy deer habitat. Also, it is used as a firearms practice range. Kinney Creek is heavily used by motorized vehicles, and both of these areas are becoming heavily overused. In both areas, the land is abused (i.e., keggars, garbage) which is defacing the scenery.
- Solution: 19 Restriction of vehicles by positive methods: Bulldozing, rocks and/or trenches to restrict traffic.
- Conflict: 20 Entire Mink Creek Recreation Area should be off-limits to all forms of motorized vehicles (i.e., snowmobiles and trail bikes). Also, grazing of livestock should be limited.
- Solution: 20 Snowmobiles and trail bikes have good use of Arbon Valley, Rapid Creek area, tons of BLM land and lots of land on the east bench of Pocatello.
- Conflict: 21 Use of motorized vehicles in small concentrated areas, resulting in congestion, erosion and dramatic noise levels at areas close or adjacent to main thoroughfares.
- Solution: 21 Either disperse ORV use or eliminate congested areas through management.

Conflict: 22 Motorized vehicles on Gibson Jack Trail conflicts with all other educational and recreational uses.

Solution: 22 No motorized vehicles - especially on Gibson Jack Trail.

Conflict: 23 (a) Beaver management and city watershed.
(b) Livestock grazing and hunting.
(c) Livestock grazing and mule deer fencing and summer range.
(d) Trail bikes and deer summer range.

Solution: 23 (a) Stabilize beaver populations.
(b) Fence some riparian areas or reduce livestock.
(c) Reduce livestock.
(d) Restrict bike use to established trails.

Conflict: 24 Conflict between uses which are dependent on a natural setting such as bird watching and uses which are not such as 4 x 4's.

Solution: 24 Conflict should be resolved in favor of the activity requiring a natural setting.

Conflict: 25 Vandalism at Cherry Springs.

Solution: 25 More surveillance by Forest Service personnel and residents within the area. When caught, the culprits should face stiff monetary penalties and jail time.

Conflict: 26 Activities listed are used both on Forest and on adjacent private land by trespassers.

Solution: 26 Landowners should sell or trade their land so that this would not be a conflict.

Conflict: 27 Potential conflicts if the proposed development of Garden Creek area becomes reality.

Solution: 27 Forest Service, Fish and Game and all user groups remain united in opposing this project.

Conflict: 28 Conflicts between the different groups of people who use public land.

Solution: 28 All people pay taxes and support public areas, therefore, no definite dictation of any area should be made as to

who should use it. Aside from special environmental problems and watershed areas, all public lands should be used by all groups.

The following items were listed not as conflicts, but as uses which may need correction or attention:

1. No conflicts, but misuse of closed roads by 4-wheel drive vehicles and motorized vehicle operators. Suggests: Public announcement of violations (e.g., police log in newspaper) along with strict enforcement. Long-term solution: Extensive public awareness campaigns thru the media, accompanied by an explanation of closure criterion and potential long-term results of these closures.
2. Four-wheel drive operators need to be educated and monitored to keep serious damage from happening when roads are muddy.
3. Four-wheel vehicles should be restricted to access roads only.
4. All of the Mink Creek area off-limits to 4 x 4's, motorcycles (dirt bikes) with the exception of main roads.
5. No motorized vehicle use on the west side of Mink Creek Road from Slate Mountain Trail to the head of the drainage.
6. Opposition to roaded timber access in the head of South Fork; all of Garden Creek thru Valve House due to calving area.
7. Fuelwood gathering area should be kept away from existing recreational trails.
8. Woodcutting is causing terrible damage to beautiful areas.
9. Restrict motorbike use and firewood gathering.
10. All livestock removed by August 1 in order to expand elk population meadow access. In particular, the Midnight and West Fork drainage since it is an excellent herd brood area.
11. Not at this time. If conflicts occur, amount of grazing could be reduced.
12. No area belongs to any one group; it is all public land.

V. RECREATION TRENDS

RECREATION TRENDS - NATIONAL

In 1982 and 1983, a Nationwide Recreation Survey was conducted. This was sponsored by the National Park Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and the Administration on Aging. A total of 5,757 interviews were conducted nationwide. This survey provided information on current status, past changes and expected trends in 36 outdoor recreational activities (62).

The following is a short-term trend indicator table from that survey:

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>%A</u>	<u>%B</u>	<u>%C</u>	<u>%D</u>	<u>%E</u>
Bicycling	32	5	5	3	+ 3
Horseback Riding	9	9	7	15	+17
Fishing	34	6	5	5	+ 6
Hunting	12	12	13	7	+ 6
Camping	24	--	2	5	+ 3
Backpacking	5	17	5	14	+26
Day Hiking	14	10	3	9	+16
Pleasure Walking	53	--	1	1	--
Running/Jogging	26	--	5	6	+ 1
Bird Watching (Or Other Nature Studies)	12	13	X	2	+15
Picnicking	48	--	1	X	+ 1
Pleasure Driving	48	--	X	1	+ 1
Sightseeing	46	--	1	1	--
Off-Road Vehicle Driving (Does not include Snowmobiling)	11	24	3	2	+23
Ice Skating	6	--	6	10	+ 4
Snow Skiing	9	--	5	24	+19
Cross-Country Skiing or Ski Touring	3	42	3	33	+72
Snowmobiling	3	24	7	19	+36

A) Percentage of total sample who said they participated at least once in prior 12 months.

Based on the difference between age on starting the activity and current age. Not ascertained for certain activities (--).

B) Percentage who started activity in prior two years.

Persons who said they stopped during the prior two years and expect to start in the next two years were not included in these percentages.

C) Percentage who said they stopped activity in prior two years.

D) Percentage who said they expect to start activity in next two years.

E) Column added by MCRA author. Percentage of potential growth.

X) Less than one-half of one percent.

PLEASE NOTE: Seven activities were deleted from the table since they do not occur in the MCRA.

This survey does not indicate that any of the activities listed have declined in absolute numbers over the last two decades. Some may have declined in terms of the percentage of age - 12 and over that participated. Most have shown growth and a few, much more dramatic growth. These include; jogging, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and other off-road vehicle activities. These have grown from almost a zero base.

Another method to look at past and possible future outdoor recreation trends, is to look at historical recreational expenditures. The following chart shows a continued national growth in the recreation industry.

EXPENDITURES	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
Firearms & Hunting Eq.	891	996	1030	1134	1242	1281	1391	1488
Bicycles & Supplies	1090	855	894	996	1006	1290	1233	1418
Fishing Tackle	440	469	476	492	472	516	539	571
Camping Eq.	352	447	529	492	472	434	503	548
Snow Skiing Eq.	344	356	404	483	594	606	572	572
Snowmobiles	240	224	200	265	311	254	216	259
Archery Eq.*	99	122	132	132	127	130	149	163
Hunting Licenses*	141	155	164	173	185	199	222	242
Fishing Licenses	130	142	155	156	159	174	196	213
Totals	3,727	3,766	3,984	4,323	4,568	4,884	5,021	5,474
Annual % Increase	-	+9.9%	+9.4%	+9.2%	+9.4%	+9.3%	+9.7%	+9.1%
Growth Index	100	102	112	122	132	144	144	158

(*) Not available in the source document. Estimated by authors.

Source: Extracted from Statistics on Outdoor Recreation. Resources for the Future, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1984, Clawson, Marlon and C. S. Van Doren (eds.).

Recreational use trends in the MCRA are not unlike the national outdoor recreation trends. During the last decade, 62-64% of the recreation on all National Forests has been dispersed (63). On the Pocatello Ranger District, 66.6% of the recreation use is dispersed.

The increased growth in dispersed recreation demand, coupled with no growth in the supply of opportunities will continue to pose significant problems for dispersed recreation managers. The principal problems identified by these managers (nationwide) include land use conflicts, user conflicts, administrative problems, depreciative behavior, inadequate site design, crowding and ecosystem disturbance (64). These same problems are in part what stimulated the development of this paper.

More specific future problems might include:

Water - Increased use in dispersed settings will continue to threaten and reduce water quality (65). This is a concern in the municipal watershed.

Fish - Most lakes and streams are stocked because they cannot support the number and quality of fish that users have come to expect (66). The main Mink Creek drainage is stocked several times a year for this same reason (67).

Vegetation - Increased use of popular recreation sites has and will continue to "beat" them out. When this happens, visitors tend to expand the site or select new areas which increases the amount of ecosystem disturbance (68). This not only effects the ground-level vegetation, but also has severe impacts on any trees. This is due to the destruction of the surface roots which provide the majority of the moisture, nutrients and oxygen to the tree.

Presently, there are only a few sites at Scout Mountain Campground and the picnic area where there is this concern. Of greater concern, is the heavy use of dispersed sights in Lead Draw, and the South, East and Main Forks of Mink Creek. These areas have shown an increased impact of use in the last five years with no change in sight.

Soil - Off-road vehicle use is a major cause of soil compaction and erosion (69). Loss of vegetation cover and soil erosion go hand-in-hand. As discussed in "Reason for Developing the MCRA Paper", this has been a problem in the MCRA as far back as 1973 and has continued to be a problem. (Appendix 1) All indications are that this type of use will continue at the same or higher levels.

Wildlife - Wildlife is a strong attractor of dispersed recreation. Nationwide, hunting is projected to increase, but not to the levels of fishing (70). This same trend has been occurring in the MCRA over the last half decade. Big game hunting has grown 3% while fishing has increased 96%.

Habitat destruction from projected urban growth will leave undeveloped public lands one of the few places where most wildlife can be observed (71). Nationwide, urban growth pressures can be expected to increase and currently, threaten wildlife.

The high estimates of growth in population that were predicted (anywhere from 20-30%) for the Bannock County area in the early 80's, never materialized. Instead, the county grew less than five percent. Some areas that did grow, however, were adjacent to the MCRA. The most controversial proposal in the last two years was a summer home development on 3,900 acres adjacent to the MCRA. Power County approved the development in their county while Bannock County denied the proposal. Presently, that decision may be challenged in court. The attractiveness for development of these lands adjacent to the MCRA will continue in the future. With their development, will come increased poaching, pets that harass and kill wildlife, more people using wildlife habitat for their recreational activities and harassment of wildlife.

Recreation Quality - In the future, a national trend will be increased use that will decrease the resource durability. Resource quality will be reduced as a result of increased recreation use.

The quality of recreational experience will be reduced as a result of this increased use. The opportunity for solitude and a quality setting will be reduced also (72).

Socioeconomic - Much of the discussion has been, the tremendous growth nationwide in recreation use on National Forests. A note of caution should be indicated in case people believe that this will continue forever. Beginning in 1982, there have been indications that this pattern may not continue indefinitely. Since 1982, the growth of recreation use on the National Forests has leveled off some (73). There may be several reasons for this including some of the following:

Many of the "baby boom" generation have put off getting married and having children until the last few years. This means that now they not only have less discretionary money but also family obligations competing for discretionary time. The following chart shows personal consumption expenditures for recreation.

YEAR	% OF TOTAL CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURES FOR RECREATION
1983	6.55
1982	6.36
1981	6.51
1980	6.42
1979	6.56
1978	6.62
1977	6.62
1976	6.68

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business and Chase Econometrics, Bala Cynwyd.

As a result of this situation, many of these people no longer have the time to travel great distances to recreate or spend the amount of time recreating as they once did (74). This may be part of the reason the MCRA has experienced the growth it has in the last few years. Pocatello and adjacent communities are approximately 4 hours away from both Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, while they are only 10 to 30 minutes away from the MCRA. Many of these people now, do not have the same amount of time to travel as they once did to the parks, and therefore, they are recreating closer to home.

Uses may have leveled off during 1982 and 1983 due to the depth of the recession that the country was in. Finally, because of the actual real dollar loss to the Forest Service to spend on recreation since 1978 (75), the Forest Service has been forced to close some recreation facilities and the desirability of others has been reduced due to the inability to maintain them (76). In turn, this has reduced the amount of use at some of the areas.

This may have occurred at Scout Mountain Campground. Camping use leveled off until the old toilet buildings were replaced in 1984. Since then, there has been some increase in the area's use.

RECREATION TRENDS - STATE OF IDAHO

In 1983, the State of Idaho Department of Recreation updated their State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. As part of this plan, they attempted to project future trends and needs for the State.

Statewide, the SCORP Plan has projected the following increased demands for each individual recreation activity from 1980-1990:

Camping	25.94%
Picnicking	33.99%
Sightseeing	43.75%
Fishing	26.52%
Hiking/Walking	32.98%
Hunting	25.56%
Outdoor Games	44.62%
Bicycling	45.69%
Horseback Riding	36.33%
Snow Activities	35.38%

NOTE: With the exception of sightseeing, hunting and horseback riding, these projections will probably be low for the MCRA based on past and projected trends.

The Idaho Division of Economic and Community Affairs projects that the population of Bannock County will grow 16.78% between the years of 1980 and 1990. It can be assumed that if those projections happen, recreation use within the MCRA should grow proportionally.

The SCORP Plan has identified facility needs for Bannock and Power Counties. In the 1977 SCORP Plan, there was an identification of who should supply these needs. This was not done in the 1983 plan.

The following is extracted from the SCORP Plan:

OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT
FOR BANNOCK AND POWER COUNTIES

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ADDITIONAL NEEDS 1990</u>	<u>ADDITIONAL NEEDS 2000</u>	<u>PRIORITY RECOMMENDED</u>
Picnicking	Tables	214	85	Yes
Camping	Sites	537	187	Yes
Hiking	Miles	39	8	No

John Barnes, State of Idaho Department of Recreation, SCORP Coordinator, said when contacted (2/18/86), that more detailed information from the 1983 plan on other recreation needs had been lost when their department moved.

Since this more recent information is no longer available, the following information was extracted from the 1977 State SCORP Plan. The present accuracy of it is unknown.

HIGH PLAINS REGION V NEEDS

ACTIVITY	UNIT OF MEASUREMENT	1980	1985	2000
<u>WATER</u>				
Fishing (Streams)	Miles A.O.	734 528,139	588 423,329	297 213,853
<u>LAND</u>				
Bicycling	Route A.O.	108 3,566,248	133 4,377,223	199 6,550,763
Camping	Developed Sites A.O.	2,017 451,835	2,734 612,393	4,433 992,979
Hiking and Backpacking	Miles A.O.	821 3,539,415	794 3,424,039	731 3,150,553
Picnicking	Tables A.O.	1,057 515,622	1,371 668,918	2,115 1,032,289
Snowmobiling	Miles of Groomed Trails A.O.	193 132,195	351 240,028	773 529,039
Nordic Skiing	Miles of Designated Trails A.O.	75 123,441	92 151,512	137 226,746
Downhill Skiing	Acres A.O.	315 346,024	432 474,739	745 819,715

NOTE: A.O. = Activity Occasions

HIGH PLAINS REGION V NEEDS
RESPONSIBILITY TO FILL (PERCENT)

ACTIVITY	PRIVATE	LOCAL	STATE	FEDERAL
<u>WATER</u>				
Fishing (Streams)		(NEED SATISFIED)		
<u>LAND</u>				
Bicycling	0	60	20	20
Camping	20	5	15	60
Hiking and Backpacking		(NEED SATISFIED)		
Picnicking	5	30	25	40
Snowmobiling	0	30	0	70
Nordic Skiing	0	15	15	70
Downhill Skiing	100	0	0	0

HISTORIC TRENDS IN FOREST SERVICE FUNDING NATIONALLY AND FOR THE INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

As the following chart shows, P&M recreation dollars to the Forest Service dropped from 1981 to 1983. Since that time, funding has basically stabilized not counting inflation and the cost of doing business which has reduced the real dollars available. Region 4's funding has closely followed the National pattern.

Trail maintenance has been relatively steady in the Intermountain Region inspite of the National fluctuations.

Both trail and recreation construction program funding has been erratic both Nationally and Regionally after trail construction dropped dramatically from 1981 to 1982.

Last fall's projections for recreation O&M funding to stabilize or possibly increase after five years of dropping (77), may be jeopardized as a result of the Gramm, Rudman, and Hollings Congressional Bill.

	REC. O&M			REC. CONST.	
	TOTAL	R-4		TOTAL	R-4
FY '81 (Incl. GA)					
P&M Rec.	111,519.0	12,516.0	Rec. Const.	6,674.0	1,292.0
Trail Mtc.	13,689.0	934.0	Trail Const.	205,593.0	16,907.0
FY '82 (Incl. GA)					
P&M Rec.	107,260.0	12,644.0	Rec. Const.	5,499.0	400.0
Trail Mtc.	5,499.0	1,086.0	Trail Const.	4,328.0	77.0
FY '83					
P&M Rec.	92,896.0	10,160.0	Rec. Const.	9,753.0	978.0
Trail Mtc.	9,678.0	1,000.0	Trail Const.	4,864.0	152.0
FY '84					
P&M Rec.	95,361.0	10,615.0	Rec. Const.	8,987.0	742.0
Trail Mtc.	8,995.0	1,162.0	Trail Const.	5,088.0	150.0
FY '85					
P&M Rec.	97,175.0	10,977.0	Rec. Const.	11,836.0	725.0
Trail Mtc.	9,11.0	1,106.6	Trail Const.	7,062.0	358.0
FY '86					
P&M Rec.	93,485.0	10,955.0	Rec. Const.	10,315.0	823.0
Trail Mtc.	9,294.0	1,138.0	Trail Const.	6,467.0	460.0

RECREATION TRENDS FOR THE MCRA

The historic use trends for the MCRA have been up for the last decade. It would be very easy to assume that these patterns will continue into the future. A word of caution should be noted here. While using historical use figures for recreational planning can be helpful, they have deficiencies. These include; 1) there is the assumption in many cases that high participation indicates successful planning, 2) it equates past participation with demand and assumes historical trends will follow suit. This approach tends to be self-reinforcing by perpetuating those activities into the future that were supplied in the past, and does not consider latent demand or demand not revealed in past participation, 3) provides little or no substitution opportunities between activities, 4) it defines recreation as an activity, not as an experience and provides little or no insight into the social utility of the opportunities provided and 5) it nurtures a static rather than dynamic concept of recreation demand (78).

A good deal of the initial growth of recreation in the MCRA for the first couple of years in the 1980's, can be attributed to an increase in the local population. This growth has slowed down a great deal and projections of growth for the remainder of this decade are conservative. A lot of the secondary growth in recreation use was the result of the Pocatello Ranger District responding to the first increases by developing new dispersed facilities along with the first phases of Cherry Springs Nature Area. This was accomplished primarily through the use of volunteers and contributions from the private sector. These new developments not only went to relieve the pressure from the first wave of increased use but also attracted a whole new group of users into the area. Now some of these new improvements are up to their carrying capacity.

The following chart shows the historic recreational use on the Pocatello Ranger District since 1981. For more detailed recreational use information in the MCRA see "Present Situation - Recreation".

POCATELLO RANGER DISTRICT RECREATION VISITOR DAY USE 1981-1985

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF RECREATION VISITOR DAYS</u>
1985	230,400
1984	179,026
1983	126,000
1982	116,000
1981	101,000

The increased recreation use on the Pocatello Ranger District can be attributed to several things in addition to the items discussed in the "National Trends - Socioeconomic" section (ex. people recreating closer to home, etc.). These include; 1) the number of groomed snowmobile trails have doubled in the last five years, 2) two new Park 'N' Ski lots have been added to the system, 3) Pebble Creek Ski Area has added one new double and one new tripple chair lifts along with two new ski runs to their permitted area and an intensive grooming program, 4) the first two phases of Cherry Springs Nature Area were developed, 5) three new nordic ski trails were developed, 6) two new multiple use trails were developed along with the completion of the 40-mile Boundary Trail, 7) the public Yurt system was begun with three being located on the Pocatello Ranger District, 8) six day-a-week monitoring of Mink Creek recreational use began in 1984, 9) the introduction of the fee system and the use of Campground Hosts, provided better developed site data, 10) an additional snowmobile parking lot was developed, 11) four old toilets at Scout Mountain were replaced with new ones, 12) opening morning of deer season information stations were setup in 1984 where more accurate hunter counts were obtained, 13) six new recreation Special Use Permits were issued since 1983, 14) public awareness of the Pocatello Ranger District has increased (See the areas on the District that the public is familiar with from the comparison of the 1980 and 1985 Phone Surveys.) in part due to the great deal of focus from the media on many stories in the last three years and, 15) the Park 'N' Ski and Snowmobile Grooming Programs have been refined and improved with the cooperators.

In the foreseeable future, the total number of recreationists adjacent to the MCRA will probably not grow that dramatically based on recent projections from the State of Idaho Division of Economic and Community Affairs. But, the awareness and use of recreation will increase not only by the adjacent public, but also regionally. This will not be from simple word-of-mouth information being spread, but from increase in the media attention this area is receiving, State tourism efforts directed towards specific recreational opportunities in this area, and recent articles in National trade and sport magazines.

Another question is not how much recreation to plan for in the MCRA, but also what types. Five years ago, 3- & 4-wheel ATV's and mountain bikes were not seen in the MCRA. In the the 1985 Phone Survey, 16% of the people surveyed indicated that they used mountain bikes (non-motorized) and 32% used 3- & 4-wheel ATV's. The Forest Service does not even include mountain bikes and 3- & 4-wheel ATV's in their own category in the RIM information. In another five years, there may very well be a recreational activity that is going on that is not even discussed in this paper.

By evaluating the information developed in the "1985 Phone Survey", a brave or foolish soul might make some projections for the future. The reader can determine what the conveyor of the following is.

By comparing questions nine and ten where the person is asked what recreational activities they anticipate trying or quitting in the next five years, these projections can be made:

PROJECTED CHANGES IN RECREATIONAL USE FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS
ON THE POCA TELLO RANGER DISTRICT

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>% INCREASE OR DECREASE</u>
Alpine Skiing	+ 7.0%
Archery	+ 2.0%
3-and 4-Wheel ATV's	+ 1.0%
Backpacking	- 1.0%
Horseback Riding	+ 4.0%
Hunting	- 1.0%
Mountain Bike Riding (Non-Motorized)	+ 1.0%
Mountain Climbing	+ 1.0%
Nordic Skiing	+10.0%
Target Shooting	+ .5%
Snow Boarding	+ 1.0%
Snowshoeing	+ 3.0%
Snowmobiling	+ 2.0%
Trail Bike Riding (Motorized)	- 1.0%
4-Wheeling	+ 1.5%
Bicycling (Street)	- .5%

Several rash assumptions can be made from this table. 1) It appears that mountain bike and 3-& 4-wheel ATV use will not continue to grow the next five years as they have, 2) any changes + or - 2% on the table may be negligible, 3) modest increases in horseback riding, and snowshoeing can be expected, and 4) the continued high demands and use for nordic skiing will continue into the future.

RECREATIONAL FINANCING TRENDS ON THE POCATELLO RANGER DISTRICT

The following is a chart showing historical trends for recreational financing on the Pocatello Ranger District.

POCATELLO RANGER DISTRICT OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURE PER RVD INCLUDING TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Year	Rec. \$'s	Trail \$	Other Rec \$	Total \$'s	RVD's	\$ Avail 4 RVD
1986	38,000	9,750	-	47,750		\$.21(a)
1985	48,456	9,006	-	57,462	230,400	\$.25
1984	53,000	10,711	-	63,711	179,026	\$.36
1983	51,666	8,500	6,000 (b)	66,166	126,000	\$.53
1982	49,202	7,461	8,500 (c)	65,153	116,000	\$.56
1981	61,589	8,595	24,175(c) 13,250(b)	107,609	101,000	\$1.07

(a) Estimate Based on 1985 Visitor Day Use

(b) YCC Recreation Program Dollars

(c) YACC Recreation Program Dollars

The Forest Service's present willingness to finance a viable recreation program on the Pocatello Ranger District, is abysmal. The Pocatello Ranger District received thirty-eight thousand dollars to run its total recreation program in 1986. Pocatello is the second largest city in the State of Idaho, and the District provides year-round outdoor recreational opportunities for it. If the Forest Service is not willing or able to finance the Pocatello Ranger District at the levels needed to supply present and future demands, they will have to allow it more flexibility to manage what financial resources it does have.

There are several improvements that are needed in the MCRA. These will, however, require outside financing or a tremendous amount of volunteer effort in order to accomplish them. The only item that is slated for financing by the Forest Service is a permanent toilet at Cherry Springs Nature Area. For this reason, the public will be directing in a sense what the future of recreation opportunities are in the MCRA by what they are willing to do as volunteers or willing to donate. This trend has already begun based on the number of improvements already accomplished by the public. (Appendix 16) The only problem is that the District's ability to manage these volunteer efforts has reached its limit. At present manpower levels, these volunteer accomplishments will be less in the future.

VI. MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MCRA
OR NOW THAT WE KNOW WHAT'S OUT THERE, WHAT DO WE DO WITH IT?

"There are many great interests in the National Forests which sometimes conflict a little. They must all be made to fit into one another so that the machine runs smoothly as a whole. It is often necessary for one man to give way a little here, another a little there. But by giving a little at present, they both profit by it a great deal in the end." (Gifford Pinchot)

It is obvious that there are some conflicts in the MCRA, not only between various recreational activities, but also between recreation and other resource uses. In addition to the conflicts, there are also some resource opportunities available to enhance all resources in the MCRA. Several management alternatives are presented to be considered by management with a preferred one being identified.

Any alternative that may be implemented must be compatible with the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan unless the "Plan" is amended, or until the "Plan" is updated in the future.

Although a variety of alternatives will be briefly discussed, this is not intended to be a NEPA document. It is instead, intended to recommend more detailed direction that may be at least partially implemented under the scope of the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

Some of the possible alternative management opportunities include: 1) leave all present activities in place with no changes except where specifically directed in the "Plan", 2) recommend the area for wilderness designation, 3) nominate the area for National Recreation Area designation, 4) recommend specific management direction to resolve various issues for the Special Management Area identified by the Forest Land and Resource Plan, 5) recommend specific management direction to resolve the issues for all of the MCRA study area, and 6) select either Alternative #5 or #6, and publically name the area in order to have an identifiable Recreational Resource Management Area in Southeastern Idaho.

ALTERNATIVE # 1: "NO ACTION" - EXCEPT AS DIRECTED BY THE FOREST LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

While there is nothing wrong with the direction provided in the "Plan", it is not specific enough to solve all the questions raised. In addition, it does nothing to solve any concerns south of Bannock Highway.

In spite of the fact that only 18% of the people interviewed in the 1985 Phone Survey said that they would recommend a change in recreation management on the Caribou National Forest, there is enough evidence to show that there are areas where improvement is needed.

**ALTERNATIVE #2: RECOMMEND WILDERNESS DESIGNATION FOR THE MINK CREEK
RARE II AREA.**

This alternative would not be compatible with the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. If it were the recommended alternative, it would require that the "Plan" be amended.

Besides the fact that this alternative conflicts with the "Plan", the reasons for not selecting it as the recommended alternative are as follows:

1. The amount of development that has occurred in the Mink Creek RARE II area including; (a) two transmission powerlines, (b) three roads, and (c) various water improvements including pipe lines, concrete spring boxes and ditches.
2. Conflicts between intensive watershed management for the municipal watershed and wilderness management.
3. Historic mechanized use by trail bikes and snowmachines including 12 miles of groomed trails and \$49,290 dollars from the State of Idaho ORV Fund spent on trail improvements.
4. Potential conflicts with Indian Treaty Rights.
5. A private land inholding.
6. On three sides of the RARE II area, there are no adequate buffers from more intensive land uses including; mines, urban and industrial development.
7. There are conflicts with aspen management for elk and grouse habitat improvement.
8. The air shed does not meet class one air standards several weeks a year.
9. There are conflicts with other existing special uses including; (a) one television transmission satellite receiving dish, (b) S.C.S. snow pillow and weather site, and (c) a road under Special Use Permit.
10. There have been historic timber sales in the area.

ALTERNATIVE #3: RECOMMEND NOMINATING THE MCRA FOR NATIONAL RECREATION AREA DESIGNATION.

According to the U.S. Forest Service Manual, Chapter 2371.01, National Recreation Areas should be; "A few areas with outstanding combinations of outdoor recreation opportunities, esthetic attractions, and proximity to potential users..."

In the evaluation of any area for possible nomination as a "National Recreation Area", the key to the evaluation is that the system needs "a few" areas that meet all of the criteria.

The Mink Creek Recreation Area may meet two of the three criteria established. It is within a few hours drive of large populations including Salt Lake City, Ogden, and Boise and has a wide variety of recreational opportunities with the exception of not having any significant water sports. What it is missing, however, is scenery which would make it be of "National" interest.

While the area is scenic, it is not outstanding or unique for the Nation. Areas of similar scenic quality can be found in various locations throughout the Intermountain area.

One step in the U.S. Forest Service's Visual Management System, is the evaluation and mapping of a given area's "variety class". This is the method used to evaluate an area's scenic quality. There are five different criteria that are evaluated in determining if an area is considered "distinctive", "common", or "minimal". These criteria include; 1) land form, 2) rock form, 3) vegetation, 4) water forms that are lakes, and 5) water forms that are streams. This criteria is established for adjacent or individual National Forests. They are not compared Nationally. In other words, a landscape that is "distinctive" on the Kisatchie National Forest in Louisiana may not be so if it were being compared with one on the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Wyoming.

The variety class mapping was completed for the MCRA in July of 1980 (79).

Within the MCRA, approximately 9% of the area was found to be "distinctive", 59% of the area was found to be "common", and 32% of the area was found to be "minimal". This would not constitute a "National" significant scenic landscape.

ALTERNATIVE #4: RECOMMEND SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT DIRECTION TO RESOLVE VARIOUS ISSUES FOR THE SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA IDENTIFIED BY THE FOREST LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN.
(See a map of the area on the following page.)

This alternative would better be described as "Compromises #1". The premise here is that most intelligent human beings can peacefully co-exist if; 1) there is a partial understanding of the other one's needs, 2) conflicts are reduced where possible, 3) most people feel that they are being treated fairly and 4) the rules of the game are understandable and enforceable. That is the premise, though to be completely successful in the execution, it would take a Ghandi. Since he isn't available, this proposal will have to do.

Because the MCRA is a finite resource, a certain amount of sharing will have to occur. This is because there has been no use activity identified as not being, to some degree, compatible with the goals and objectives of the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. This is not to say that all activities are compatible on every acre in the MCRA and with each other. This means that there are a variety of general management options available to aid in implementation.

Management Options

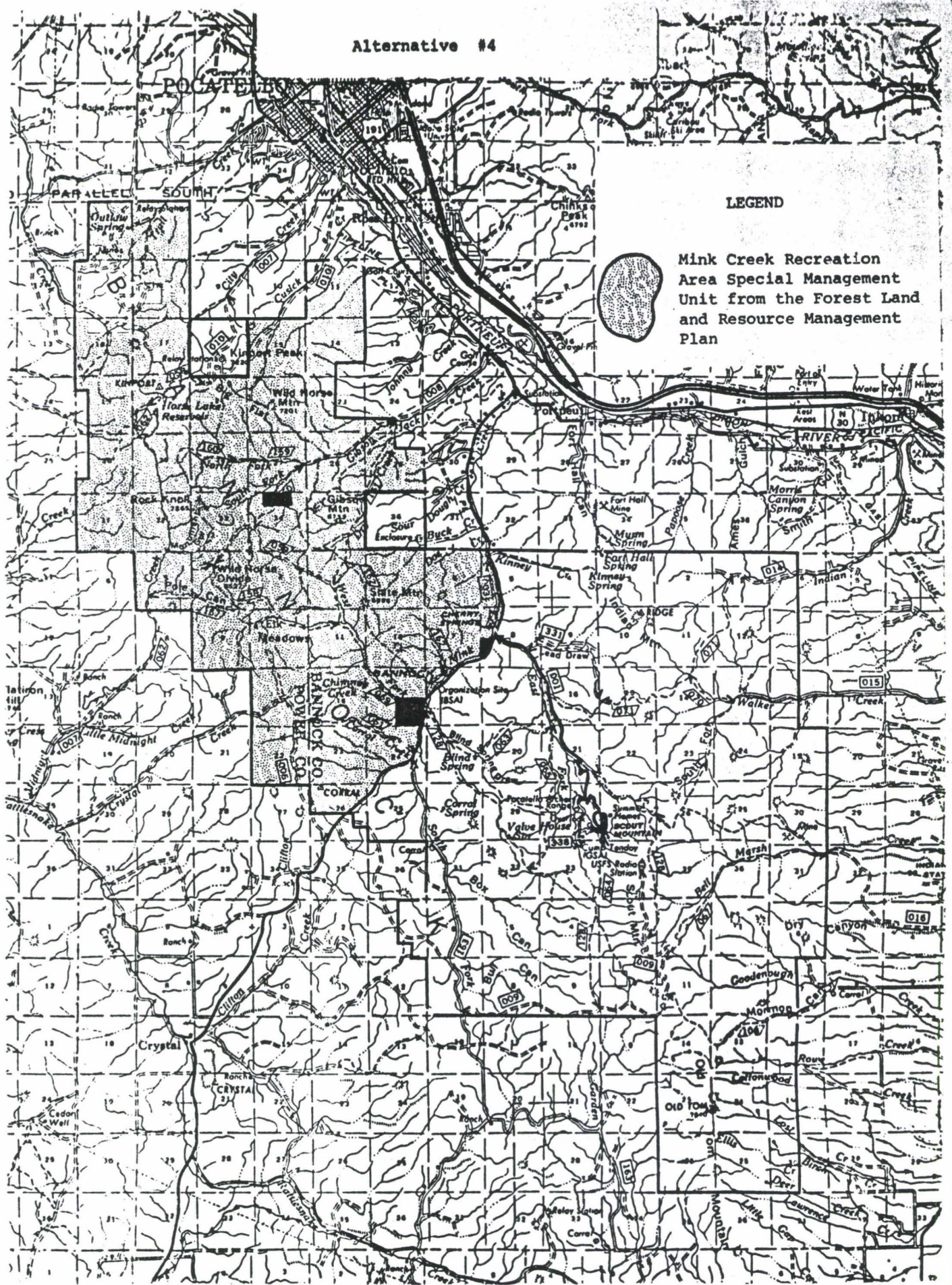
1. Open some areas to all activities with no restrictions other than for resource protection.
2. Zone some areas for specific uses.
3. Allow conflicting activities to use the same area, but on different days.
4. In areas where there is no option but to allow conflicting uses to occur simultaneously, institute an education program to teach user groups respect for other activities.
5. Substitute one activity location for another similar setting when an activity must be removed from an area.
6. Improve the desirability of an existing use area for an activity when the use is impacted elsewhere.
7. Improve the desirability of an area in order to attract an activity away from an already overused site or area.
8. When the Forest Service is unable to properly manage an activity due to lack of time and/or resources, if reasonable, turn part of this responsibility over to another group, agency or individual.

Alternative #4

POCAHONTAS

LEGEND

Mink Creek Recreation
Area Special Management
Unit from the Forest Land
and Resource Management
Plan



9. Trade management responsibilities for an activity with another group, individual or agency for another activity where they have more expertise in order for both entities to be more efficient.
10. Pursue land exchanges in order to reduce conflicts or potential conflicts with good management.
11. Allow Supervisor Office personnel under the direction of the District Ranger to handle day-to-day management of certain activities in order to better utilize a resource in the same building and to increase their experience and expertise.
12. Pursue the establishment of an Interpretive Association to help raise funding and assistance in the management of interpretation and environmental education.
13. At any time or any location that an activity is causing environmental damage that cannot be adequately mitigated, remove that activity from the location and find a more appropriate area for its continued use if possible.

APPLICATION OF MANAGEMENT OPTIONS AND MANAGEMENT DIRECTION FOR ALTERNATIVE #4

The following two pages show general travel management direction for both summer and winter use of the area contained in Alternative #4.

Proposed management direction will be given by each geographic location within the Special Management Area of the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. In addition, a priority will be given to each recommendation made based on the following scale:

Recommended Priority Scale

Priority #1 "Highest" - An action that should be taken immediately, using all energies and resources that are available to the Caribou National Forest or the Intermountain Region.

Priority #2 "High" - An action that should be done as soon as resources are available.

Priority #3 "Moderate" - An action that should be accomplished when opportunity arises or resources are available, provided it does not inhibit the accomplishment of a higher priority.

Priority #4 "Low" - An action that should be accomplished when opportunity arises or resources are available provided that it does not consume any resources that might ever go towards accomplishing a higher priority.

Priority "S" "S.O.P." - An activity that will be standard operating procedure for any regular or proposed management action.

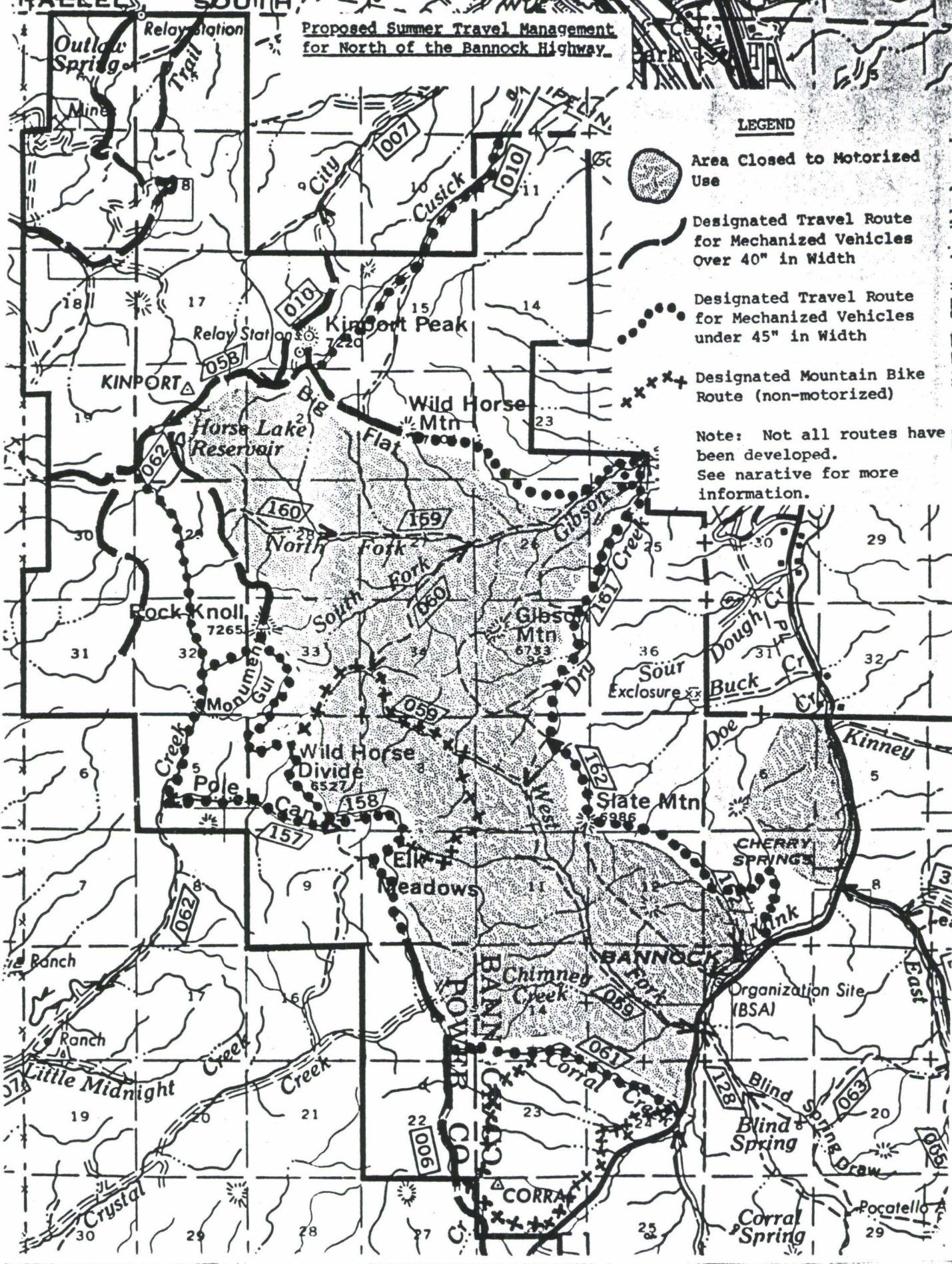
PALMER SOUTH Proposed Summer Travel Management for North of the Bannock Highway.



LEGEND

- Area Closed to Motorized Use
- Designated Travel Route for Mechanized Vehicles Over 40" in Width
- Designated Travel Route for Mechanized Vehicles under 45" in Width
- Designated Mountain Bike Route (non-motorized)

Note: Not all routes have been developed. See narrative for more information.



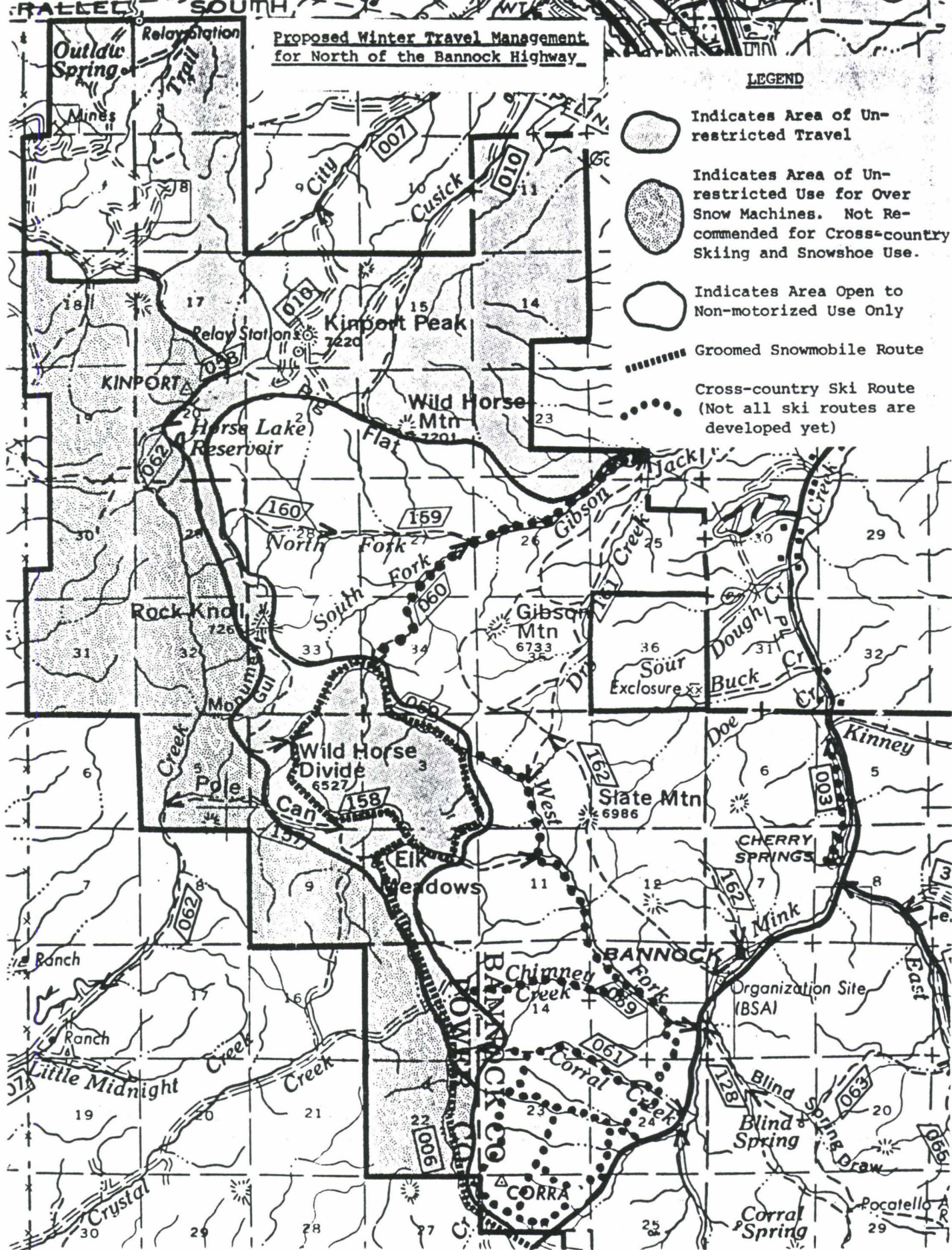
Outdoor Spring

Indicates Area of Un-
restricted Travel

Indicates Area Open to
Non-motorized Use Only

Groomed Snowmobile Route

Cross-country Ski Route
(Not all ski routes are
developed yet)



Trail Creek Road Access to the AT&T Site and Patented Land - Continue to allow all types of ORV use on this road. Enhance this activity by developing a system route using better signing and providing ORV use maps for the area. Priority #3 Keep this road as part of a larger ORV system. Use should be restricted to designated routes only since this area is within a non-intensive management prescription.

Continued monitoring should occur due to the nature of the activity and the suitability of the land type. Priority "S"

Application of these improvements could be assisted or done by ORV groups. Assistance and resources might be acquired through the State of Idaho ORV Program.

Coordination should be done with the BLM since they manage adjacent public lands that are popular for ORV use. Priority "S"

Consultation should be made with AT&T and FMC in order to protect their improvements or avoid conflicts. Priority "S"

There may be an opportunity to work with FMC in developing more ORV opportunities through the use of some of their mined-out land or contribution of their available equipment. Priority #4

A gate should be installed at the National Forest Boundary in order to protect the area's resources from out-of-season use. Priority #3

Trail Creek - Continue to allow motorized access of this area only if no resource damages that cannot be reasonably mitigated or conflicts with existing range uses and improvements occur. This route is not important to have available for a good ORV Trail System.

Motorized access should continue to be allowed for range permittees even if it means putting the existing road under a road use agreement.

A gate should be installed at a strategic location in order to protect resources from damage due to out-of-season road use. Priority #4

City Creek - The only portion of this drainage that is on the National Forest, is the upper end. The remaining portion is primarily on State of Idaho land. This access has historically been very popular for ORV use and was developed to access the top of Kinport Peak where several electronic sites are located. Due to this use and the lack of any management by the State, the road and adjacent land is in very poor condition. The road itself is very hazardous for any ORV use.

The State of Idaho should be encouraged to improve this access road to a safe standard. Priority #4

The Caribou National Forest should work with the State of Idaho in implementing a seasonal closure on this road. It would be best to locate this closure on the State land since it is difficult to have an effective physical closure on this road once it enters the National Forest. Priority #3

If this road were improved to a safe standard, and the State of Idaho were willing, it could be made a part of an ORV Trail System. Priority #4

Gusick Creek - This drainage has a road in it that is under Special Use Permit to Group W Cable. It is gated at both ends with trail use by vehicles under 40" as the only motorized use that is permitted. Access to this road/trail is difficult since it goes through the City of Pocatello's municipal water storage facilities.

The Forest Service should work with the City of Pocatello to improve trail access while at the same time, protect the City's facilities. Priority #4

The Forest Service should trade the City of Pocatello a portion of T. 7S., R. 34E., Section 11 for an equal value of the City's inholding in Mink Creek. The City could retain ownership of any land where their water system intake improvements are located if they do not wish to enter into a Term Special Use Permit for the development on the National Forest. The City could in turn exchange the former Forest Service property to the landowner who owns the inholding in Gibson Jack Creek. Finally, the Forest Service could exchange another portion of Section 11 to the City for the Gibson Jack inholding. (Section 11 is adjacent to other City property.) If this is done; 1) the private landowner would have a parcel of land that could be developed which is adjacent to other developed land, 2) the City would not ever have to worry about someone, someday attempting to develop anything in the middle of their municipal watershed while maintaining all of their water developments, along with obtaining land that is adjacent to some that they already own, and 3) the Forest Service would get rid of two inholding problems. Priority #1 (This should be a high priority land exchange for the Intermountain Region.)

Gibson Jack Creek - The main Gibson Jack Trail should be closed to mechanized (including mountain bikes) use after an alternative (substitute) route is developed for mechanized use activities under 45". Priority #2 Non-mechanized users should be encouraged to help in this effort since it is primarily for their benefit. The Sierra Club in particular should be interested in this project.

A nordic ski route can be developed from Gibson Jack to West Mink. Priority #4

An evaluation should be made as to what can be done to improve the Gibson Jack Trailhead for better parking and access. In addition, develop trailhead facilities to accommodate the area's needs. Priority #2

An information sign should be developed to explain the significance of the City's watershed and the Gibson Jack Research Natural Area. Priority #3 The City could be approached about having their sign shop develop this sign, and the Forest Service could install it.

A land exchange effort should be undertaken for the private inholding in Gibson Jack as outlined under the "Cusick Creek" section. Priority #1

Gibson Jack Creek should be monitored regularly for Giardiasis contamination. If Giardiasis does pose a problem, institute restrictions on the types of uses that may be causing the problem. In addition, work with the State of Idaho Department of Fish and Game on monitoring the health of the beaver population and its management. Priority #2

Develop more vandal resistant signs for the Gibson Jack Trailhead. Priority #3

Accesses: Between Gibson Jack and Buck Creek - Gate Access to National Forest, BLM and State Lands - Allow public use of any existing trails for mechanized use only after an evaluation of their suitability is made. Priority #4 Since these trails would serve only a special interest group, a Volunteer Agreement would have to be signed for their maintenance.

Buck Creek - Work with the BLM to install a gate on the Public Land entrance. Priority #4

Obtain a right-of-way from the private landowner for agency access. Priority #4

The Buck Creek Trail should continue to be for non-mechanized use only due to its access into West Mink. Any improvements or public use should be dependent upon the willingness of a volunteer group to take on the responsibility for this trail.

Cherry Springs Nature Area - Cherry Springs has the potential to become one of the most important developed sites on the Caribou National Forest. Work with the State of Idaho Department of Fish and Game in the development of a Beaver Management Plan to enhance the environmental education opportunities with this animal. Priority #3

Develop a two-unit combination toilet/VIS shelter. If possible, use a "Clivus Multrum" type sewage disposal system. Priority #1

Redevelop the water system for the area. Priority #3

Develop an amphitheater for environmental activities. Priority #1 Contact Idaho Power regarding the contribution of running power to the amphitheater and of other possible resources.

Expand the Nature Trail System (south) into the actual Cherry Springs area itself and back down into Mink Creek. Priority #2 Consult with the Environmental Education Association of Southeast Idaho on the project and for their assistance.

Add two "learning centers" to the area. Priority #2

Complete handicapped fishing stations along Mink Creek and make an evaluation to see if any additional ones are needed. Priority #2 Work with the Cooperative Wilderness Handicapped Outdoor Group and Forest Hydrologist/Fisheries Biologist. (Appendix #18)

Do some fish habitat improvement projects at various locations in Mink Creek. Priority #3 Gain assistance from a rod and gun type club or do as part of a "hands on" environmental education class project under the direction of a Fisheries Biologist.

Finish making phase one of the nature trail handicapped accessible and investigate the possibilities of making this trail accessible to the visually impaired. Priority #2 Continue to use the Cooperative Wilderness Handicapped Outdoor Group and Kiwanis as consultants and volunteers for this work. (Appendix #19)

Make the prohibition of dogs more visible and as opportunities permit, increase enforcement. Priority #3

Complete installation of benches and other minor improvements. Priority #3 Continue to use volunteers for this work.

Form a Citizen's Advisory Committee made up of representatives from groups such as School District #25, Idaho State University, Cooperative Wilderness Handicapped Outdoor Group, Environmental Education Association of Southeast Idaho, and the Portneuf Valley Audubon Society. Priority #2

When needed, develop a new parking lot below the entrance gate, to the north of the fork in the road as approved in the Environmental Assessment. Priority #3

Where possible, hard surface the ramp accessed trails and other erosive areas. Priority #3

Continue to encourage Idaho State University and the Audubon Society to do research and wildlife improvement projects with Forest Service review at Cherry Springs. Priority "S"

Slate Mountain Trail - No change should be made in the present management of the Slate Mtn. Trail and vicinity. There should be continued regular maintenance of this trail.

The trailhead at Mink Creek needs an unloading ramp, hitching rack, and information box installed. Priority #3

The trailhead at Gibson Jack can share facilities with the Gibson Jack Trail and be improved as outlined in the Gibson Jack Trailhead.

West Fork of Mink Creek - Maintenance of the West Mink Trail should be high along with all improvements including bridges, signing, etc. Priority "S"

Do exchange of the City of Pocatello's inholding as outlined under Cusick Creek. Priority #1

Enlarge the parking area at West Mink Trailhead. Priority #3 The City of Pocatello and or the Park 'N' Ski Program may be of assistance with this project.

A new nordic ski trail should be developed in Chimney Creek connecting West Mink to upper Corral Creek. Priority #3 This would be accomplished as a future volunteer project.

An evaluation should be done as to the propriety of reopening the trail through the RNA that was closed which connected West Mink to the southern portion of Elk Meadows. Priority #3

Install a fish ladder structure at the intake to the City's water system so that the adult fish can ascend back up West Mink Creek.

Corral Creek - Trail maintenance should continue at the same standard as presently being done.

The Corral Creek parking area should be enlarged and reconstructed. Priority #2 This project has been submitted to the State ORV Program for financing.

Continue to allow all mechanized use under 45" on this trail in the summer and prohibit snowmobile use in the winter except for the parking area.

The trailhead needs an unloading ramp and hitching rack. Priority #3 An equestrian club can assist with this work if State ORV funding does not come through.

A new nordic ski trail should be developed between the Porcelain Pot Trailhead and the Corral Creek Trailhead. Priority #2 This will make a good volunteer project.

Porcelain Pot Gulch - Present management should continue in this area.

Enforcement needs to be increased of illegal four-wheel-drive use of the ski trail in the summer. Priority #3

The upper Porcelain Pot Trail should be connected to the new Clifton Creek Connector Trail. Priority #4

Work with a local group in developing an annual race on the Porcelain Pot Trail's Figure 8. Priority #3

Beaver Pond Parking Area - This parking area needs additional surfacing. Priority #2 The City of Pocatello and/or the Park 'N' Ski Program should be approached for assistance.

Crystal Summit - A new nordic ski route should be developed from Crystal Summit to upper Corral Creek. In the future, this route should also be upgraded to a summer hiking trail. All forms of motorized use should be prohibited on this trail. Use by mountain bikes should be permitted. This is a good volunteer project. Priority #2

Once the new trail is developed, non-mechanized recreation use should be discouraged or prohibited from using the Clifton Creek Road. This is especially true in the winter by nordic skiers because of the potential hazard from snowmachines traveling at high speeds.

There has been a proposal to re-route the first one-half mile of the Clifton Creek Road onto the National Forest from its present location on private land. If this were to happen, it would have to follow along part of the present location of the Porcelain Pot Trail and the proposed connection to Corral Creek. Since this is the only location for the ski trail to go, this route would have to be reserved for ski use in the winter.

Close the area generally to the east of the Clifton Creek Road or from the adjacent ridge as shown on the previous map until it reaches Elk Meadows, to snowmobile use. Priority #2

Skiers should be advised against using the area to the west of the Clifton Creek Road or else close it to their use. Priority #2 (See previous winter use map.)

Clifton Creek - Develop a revised Grazing Management Plan for the Midnight/Michaud Cattle Allotment. This should be done in order to reduce the conflict between cattle and recreation use primarily along the drainages in the Clifton Creek and Elk Meadows areas (80). There are two options available to not only enhance the relationship between recreation and range uses but also the range management system in these areas. These include the following:

Option #1 - Moderate cost of resources and change in range management.

- a. Separate the Midnight/Michaud Allotment into two new allotments; the Michaud Allotment and the Midnight Allotment.
- b. Combine the BLM's Crystal Allotment with the Forest Service Midnight Allotment (M.O.U.).
- c. Establish goals and objectives for BLM/FS Management Unit:
 1. Defer grazing use by using this system:
 - a. First year; BLM Midnight area to Elk Meadows.
 - b. Second year; BLM Crystal area to Clifton Creek.

2. Construct approximately one mile of let-down fence to divide Elk Meadows from Crystal Creek.
3. Remove old interior and boundary fences. (Five Miles)
4. Repair 1/4 mile of drift fence in Midnight Creek.
5. Move old cattleguard from BLM/FS boundary on Clifton Creek to Section 10/15 boundary on the Clifton Creek Road.
6. Develop a plan with the permittees to distribute the salting areas more.
7. Develop watering troughs at Deer Pass and Monument Gulch.

Option #2 - Intensive Cost of Resources and Change in Range Management.

- a. The same as Option #1 except develop four management units which will require the repair/construction of the FS/BLM boundary fence (five miles) in order to develop four separate units.

Two additional things that can be done include; 1) Identifying areas of unavoidable cattle use and moving recreational uses away from those areas, and 2) develop cattle exclosures for a few of the more popular dispersed sites. Priority #2 Some of the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan appellants should be willing to assist in the implementation of portions of this Grazing Allotment Plan.

Elk Meadows - Develop a new Range Allotment Plan as outlined in the Clifton Creek Section. Priority #2

In the summer, the west side of Elk Meadows should be accessible to motorized vehicles under 45" in width on designated routes. The east side should be open to non-motorized recreation. Mountain bikes should be permitted in this area on designated routes. No changes in the present designated travel routes should be made until quality alternative routes are developed on the west side. Priority #2

Install a warming shelter in the Elk Meadows area. Priority #2 State ORV grant money has been applied for in order to construct this project.

Pole Canyon - This trail should be reconstructed in order to accommodate trail bikes as a substitute experience for what they would partially lose in Elk Meadows. Priority #2

Midnight Creek - Upgrade the Midnight Creek Trail to accommodate a lower skill level trail bike rider. Priority #3

**ALTERNATIVE #5: SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT DIRECTION TO RESOLVE THE ISSUES
FOR ALL OF THE MCRA STUDY AREA**

Implement all of the recommendations of Alternative #4 along with the winter Travel Management Plan (on the next page) and all of the following specific recommendations for south of Bannock Highway:

Kinney Creek - Motorized use of the road in Kinney Creek should continue. A gate should be installed at the entrance on Mink Creek Road for seasonal closure to protect winter range activity and resource protection. **Priority #2**

Install an effective road closure device at the one mile point on the road. **Priority #2**

Return the creek to its original channel to prevent sedimentation from road use. **Priority #3**

Lead Draw - Consider this area for any proposed nordic skiing track setting operation. **Priority "S"**

Intensify law enforcement efforts in this area. **Priority #2** Work with the Deputy Sheriff and adjacent landowners towards this effort. Investigate the possible use of remote cameras and sensing devices.

Reinforce structural closure devices at the end of the looped road to keep vehicles over 45" from crossing the creek. **Priority #2**

Require groups of more than ten people to obtain Free Use Permits from the Forest Service in order to use the area. **Priority #2**

Install effective barriers where people are hill climbing. **Priority #2**

Intensify the "Pack-In/Pack-Out" Program. **Priority #2**

Rehabilitate the intensively used areas. **Priority #2**

Evaluate grazing management alternatives in Lead Draw to reduce cattle and recreation conflicts. **Priority #2**

East Mink - Exchange for State Inholding T8S., R34E., Section 16. **Priority #1**

If there is a request for an area to set nordic ski track, the area below the East Mink Road and near the Cattlemen's Association Cabin might be used. An arrangement could possibly be made to utilize the Cattlemen's Association Cabin as part of the operation. **Priority "S"**

Work with the Range Staff and range permittees in the development of management techniques to move the cattle away from the more popular recreational use areas. Some of these techniques might include; 1) different salting practices, 2) stock pond or watering trough development, and 3) cattle enclosures.

Proposed Winter Travel Management
for South of the Bannock Highway

LEGEND

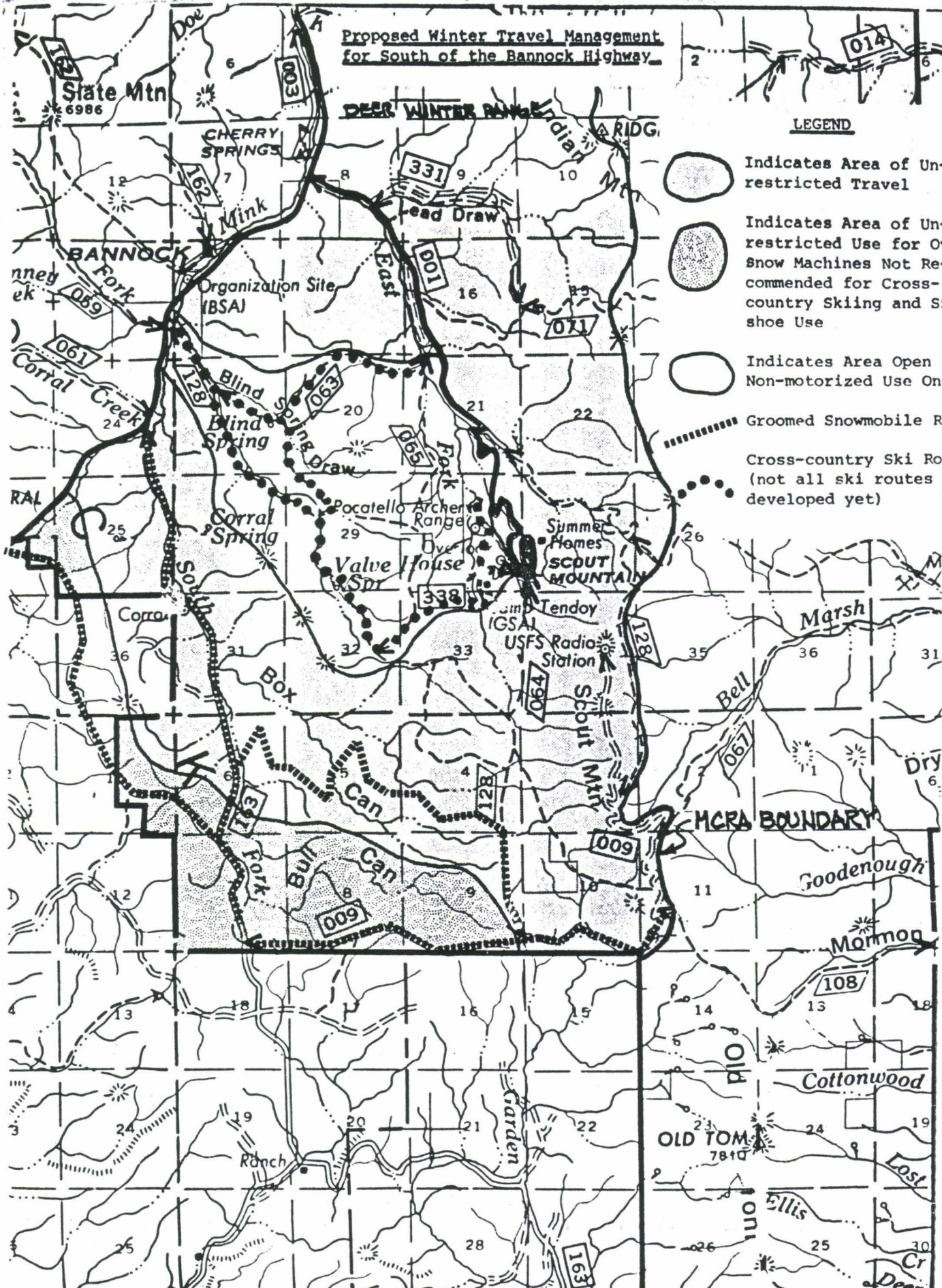
Indicates Area of Un-
restricted Travel

Indicates Area of Un-
restricted Use for Ov
Snow Machines Not Re-
commended for Cross-
country Skiing and S
shoe Use

Indicates Area Open
Non-motorized Use On

Groomed Snowmobile R

Cross-country Ski Ro
(not all ski routes
developed yet)



On the East Mink Road, above the Cattlemen's Association Cabin where the new paved road takes off from the old graveled road, divide the winter use. The paved road to the campground should be restricted to snowmobile use, and the old access road to the campground should be restricted to nordic ski use.

Priority #2

Develop a nordic ski trail from the State section over to Blind Springs.

Priority #4

Crestline Trail - Improve the parking at the trailhead. Priority #4

Install a one-unit toilet. Priority #3

Institute a "Pack-In/Pack-Out" Program at this location. Priority #3

Install several picnic tables at the trailhead. Priority #3

Install a hitching rack. Priority #3 This might be done in conjunction with other hitching racks being installed by an equestrian club.

Plant tree seedlings where beetles have killed Douglas-fir trees. Priority #3

Look into an exchange with the BLM on maintenance of this trail and/or some trails adjacent to the MCRA for administration assistance by the Forest Service to their ski area.

Scout Mountain Campground and Picnic Areas - Improve road surfacing and drainage. Priority #2

Reconstruct some sites and their accesses. Priority #3

Develop a VIS/warming hut at the entrance to the area. Priority #3

Work with the State of Idaho in the installation of a "Recreation Site Ahead" sign on Interstate 15. Priority #2

Redo the nature trail by the picnic area. Priority #2

Develop a trail that connects the campground to the Crestline Trail. Priority #4

Upgrade the campground fence. Priority #3

East Mink Trail - Improve the East Mink Trailhead by adding an unloading ramp and hitching rail. Priority #4 This could be done in conjunction with other trailhead improvements.

Scout Mountain Amphitheater - Enlarge the parking area at the site. Priority #2 This can be done as a part of the campground reconstruction.

Install and improve the existing benches at the amphitheater. Priority #3
This could be done by Camp Taylor in lieu of payment on their permit fee.

Start a weekly Environmental Education Program during the summer either here or at Cherry Springs. Priority #2

Summer Home Area - Work with permittees in a cooperative effort to maintain the fence. Priority #3

Plant tree seedlings in the summer home area. Priority #3 This should be done with the summer home permittees under the Forest Service's direction.

Camp Taylor - Improve surfacing of both accesses to Camp Taylor. Priority #3
Camp Taylor may be able to get some or all of this work donated.

White Rock Overlook Site - Install new barriers around the site. Priority #3

Develop an information sign showing points of interest. Priority #4

Pocatello Field Archers Range - Work with permittees to improve the level of maintenance of this site. Priority "S"

Evan's Inholding - Work to obtain this inholding. Priority #2

Valve House Draw - The City property at the entrance to Valve House is part of the proposed land exchange outlined under the Cusick Creek exchange. Priority #1

The bridge across Mink Creek needs to be repaired as the result of spring flooding in 1984 and 1985. Priority #3

If there is a request for track setting, lower Valve House should be evaluated as a potential site. Priority "S"

In the summer, continue to allow only non-mechanized and mechanized use under 45" in Valve House Draw. Priority "S"

Continue the rehabilitation of the Valve House Trail. Priority "S"

Protect and improve the scenic quality of upper Valve House Draw by doing timber salvage and timber stand improvement work. Priority #3 This can be accomplished by commercial fuelwood sales. Public fuelwood sales are not recommended because of the strict control measures needed.

Blind Springs - Continue ski trail maintenance. Priority "S"

South Fork of Mink Creek - Reconstruct and expand the parking area at the entrance to the South Fork Road including adding a safety barrier. Priority #2
A proposal has been submitted to the State ORV Program for funding.

Develop a snowmobile information sign and box. Priority #4

Improve a few selected dispersed sites along the road to reduce the impacts to the site and adjacent area. Priority #4

Develop better road closures off of the South Fork Road. Priority #3

Construct a cattle exclosure around a portion of the Ponderosa Pine Plantation for use by dispersed recreationists. Also, construct several fire rings for resource protection. Priority #3 The Pocatello Trail Machine Association has expressed interest in assisting with this project.

Install a gate at the south end of the South Fork Road at the National Forest Boundary. Priority #2

If a request is received for track setting for nordic skiing, consider lower South Fork of Mink Creek as a potential area. Priority "S"

Consider revising range management in the South Fork area to draw cattle away from the South Fork Creek. Some alternatives that might be considered include; 1) construct more water developments away from the main drainage, 2) build cattle exclosures along the creek and 3) intensify salting in the South Fork drainage. Priority #2 Assistance might come from rod and gun type clubs.

Box Canyon - Surface sections of the Box Canyon Road to protect the road and reduce sedimentation as a result from heavy recreational use. Priority #3

Upgrade the Box Canyon Trailhead by installing an unloading ramp and hitching rack. Priority #4

Bull Canyon - Close the road into Bull Canyon with a gate and open it only for administrative use. Priority #4

Scout Mountain Top Road - Install a gate on the Scout Mtn. Road where it takes off from the South Fork Road. Priority #3

Relocate the lower section of the Scout Mtn. Top Road and spread gravel in several locations to improve user safety, reduce maintenance and protect the resource. Priority #2

Open the ridge road between Bell Marsh and Goodenough to all mechanized users.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOTH ALTERNATIVES #4 AND #5

1. Form an Interpretive Association for this area. Priority #3
2. Develop a seasonal auto touring brochure for the MCRA with the possible help or sponsorship from a local auto dealer. Priority #3
3. Using the Recreation Opportunity Guide, develop route maps for various activities including but not limited to:
Priority #4
 - (a) All Terrain Vehicles
 - (b) Horseback Trails
 - (c) Mountain Bikes
4. Intensify timber salvage and timber stand improvement management in order to protect the scenic resources that are presently being threatened by increasing insect and disease activity. Priority #2
5. Work with the State of Idaho Department of Fish and Game in moving the general deer hunt for Unit #70 ahead one or two weeks in order to help reduce the damage to resources as a result of heavy use during bad weather. Priority #3
6. Form an umbrella group of Forest users as representatives to review management opportunities and concerns. Priority #2

ALTERNATIVE #6: RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE

Identify all of the study area with two exceptions as "Mink Creek Regional Recreation Area" and follow the directions as outlined in Alternatives #4 and #5.

Exceptions to Designation

1. Remove the Kinney Creek area from the Mink Creek Regional Recreation Area. This is because of its importance to winter wildlife habitat relative to the amount of recreation use that can be substituted somewhere else.
2. Remove the Old Tom Mountain area from the Mink Creek Regional Recreation Area due to the lack of diversity in the recreational uses of the area.
(See the map of this area on the following page.)

RECOMMENDATION

This alternative is a combination of recommendations from both Alternatives #4 and #5 with the addition of publically acknowledging the importance of recreation management in this area. This will not only help the Caribou National Forest within the agency gain an understanding in the importance of this management area, but it should also provide the adjacent towns an area that they can "show off" as an important attribute to their communities.

This can be done under the present Forest Land and Resource Management Plan although there are still things that can be done in future revisions to enhance it.

Some things that can be done to help in the identification of this area include; 1) show the area on new maps, brochures, etc., 2) place signs with this name on it at the entrances to the area, 3) tell local groups and organizations about the diversity and importance of the area to their community, 4) take local civic leaders on seasonal "show me" trips, and 5) take Regional Office Staff on seasonal "show me" trips.

Alternative #6
Proposed Mink Creek Regional
Recreation Area

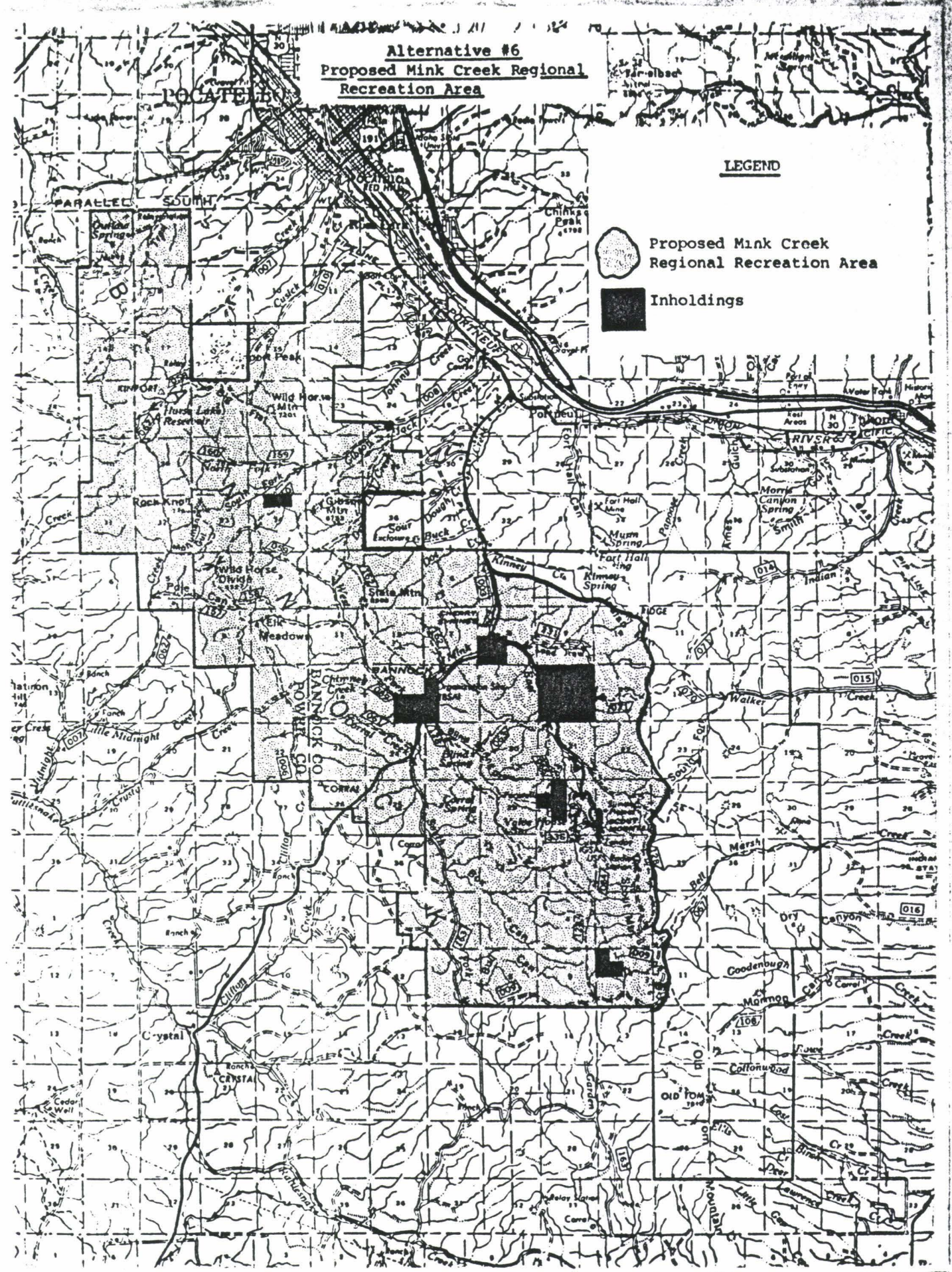
LEGEND



Proposed Mink Creek
Regional Recreation Area



Inholdings



VII. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE

This paper actually has a full range of Implementation alternatives. Everything from the Forest Supervisor and District Ranger endorsing Alternative #6 to District personnel implementing just a few of the minor recommendations.

To be a truly effective tool in order to try to solve some of the major concerns and to put the Forest Service on the right step in the future, most of the key elements should not be scuttled. For this reason, the following procedures are recommended:

1. The Forest Supervisor and District Ranger agree in concept to implement Alternatives #4, #5, or #6.
2. An interdisciplinary Team reviews the selected alternative and the recommendations. They make a recommendation to the District Ranger as to which items should be implemented and offer any additional ideas they come up with. They should identify which items can be tied to the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan or the Allotment Management Plans. If they cannot be tied to one of these, a determination of which NEPA process documentation will be needed and provide their expertise for the report.
3. The District Ranger and his Staff should review, approve and prioritize these recommendations.
4. Based on the priority list, the District Staff should develop a time frame, work plans and 1900-4's for implementation.

The following recommendations are considered key elements to effective management of the MCRA and should receive a special effort towards their implementation.

1. The Forest Service should trade the City of Pocatello a portion of T. 7S., R. 34E., Section 11 for an equal value of the City's inholding in Mink Creek. The City could retain ownership of any land where their water system intake improvements are located if they do not wish to enter into a Term Special Use Permit for the development on the National Forest. The City could in turn exchange the former Forest Service property to the landowner who owns the inholding in Gibson Jack Creek. Finally, the Forest Service could exchange another portion of Section 11 to the City for the Gibson Jack inholding.
2. The main Gibson Jack Trail should be closed to mechanized (including mountain bikes) use after an alternative (substitute) route is developed for mechanized use under 45" activities.

3. Gibson Jack Creek should be monitored regularly for *Giardia* contamination. If *Giardia* does pose a problem, institute restrictions on the types of uses that may be the cause of the problem. In addition, work with the State of Idaho Department of Fish and Game on monitoring the health of the beaver population and its management.
4. Develop a two-unit combination toilet/VIS shelter at Cherry Springs. If possible, use a "Clivus Multrum" type sewage disposal system.
5. Finish making phase one of the nature trail at Cherry Springs handicapped accessible and investigate the possibilities of making this trail accessible to the visually impaired.
6. A new nordic ski trail should be developed between the Porcelain Pot Trailhead and the Corral Creek Trailhead.
7. A new nordic ski route should be developed from Crystal Summit to upper Corral Creek. In the future, this route should also be upgraded to a summer hiking trail. All forms of motorized use should be prohibited on this trail. Use by mountain bikes should be permitted. Once the new trail is developed, non-mechanized recreation should be discouraged or prohibited from using the Clifton Creek Road.
8. Close the area generally to the east of the Clifton Creek Road or from the adjacent ridge until it reaches Elk Meadows, to snowmobile use.
9. Develop a revised Grazing Management Plan for the Midnight/Michaud Cattle Allotment. This should be done in order to reduce the conflict between the cattle and the recreation use primarily along the drainages in the Clifton Creek and the Elk Meadows areas.
10. In the summer, the west side of Elk Meadows should be accessible to motorized vehicles under 45" in width on designated routes. The east side should be open to non-motorized recreation. Mountain bikes should be permitted in this area on designated routes. No changes in present designated travel routes should be made until quality alternative routes are developed on the west side.
11. The Pole Canyon Trail should be reconstructed in order to accommodate trail bikes as a substitute experience for what they would partially lose in Elk Meadows.
12. Require groups of more than ten people to obtain Free Use Permits from the Forest Service in order to use the Lead Draw area.
13. Evaluate grazing management alternatives in Lead Draw to help reduce cattle and recreation use conflicts.
14. East Mink -- Exchange for State Inholding T. 8S., R. 34E, Section 16.
15. Work with the Range Staff and range permittees in the development of management techniques to move the cattle away from the more popular recreational use sections in the East Mink area.

16. Work with the State of Idaho in the installation of a "Recreation Site Ahead" sign on Interstate 15.
17. Consider revising range management in the South Fork of Mink Creek area to draw cattle away from the South Fork Creek.
18. Identify all of the study area as "Mink Creek Regional Recreation Area".
19. Intensify timber salvage and timber stand improvement management in order to protect the scenic resources that are presently being threatened by insect and disease activity.

VIII. APPENDIX

POCATELLO, IDAHO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 1973 Idaho State Journal - Section A - Page 7

ON GIBSON JACK CREEK

Hot Rodders in the Hills Cut Water Supply 10%

About 10 per cent of the city's source, so far is okay. water supply has been shut off. Meanwhile, a proposed subdivision because of turbidity caused by recreational vehicles in the hills city has been redesigned so it southwest of town, city manager will not interfere with the city's Charles Moss reported Tuesday water supply and other utility easements. City councilmen, in afternoon.

Gary Thornton, water superintendent, said he will contact the U.S. Forest Service about subdivision's revised plat, after measures to prevent the vehicles from fouling up Gibson Jack Creek. "We can't get along without this supply," he said.

Gibson Jack produces about 1,500,000 gallons of city water per day. It comprises about half of Pocatello's mountain water supply, which in turn produces about 20 per cent of the total water supply in summer time. The rest of the water comes from wells. Moss said Mink Creek, the other "surface" water

000 gallons of water. There was mud and water damage to homes and yards in the Johnny Creek area.

Moss and Thornton reported that motorcycles can roam the Gibson Jack area almost at the will of the rider. And a trail for four-wheel driven cars now is available near the creek's upper end. The four-wheelers and the motorcycles together, Thornton said, have caused dirt to spill into the creek. Blazing new trails off the main trail, four-wheelers apparently have cut new small channels for the creek.

It's worse this summer than ever before, Thornton said, apparently because the recreational vehicles become more and more numerous.

City Wants All Vehicles Away from Creek

The City of Pocatello has asked the U.S. Forest Service to keep motor vehicles out of the entire watershed of Gibson Jack Creek to protect the city's water supply.

Caribou National Forest's recent closure of the Gibson Jack road above the water intake is not sufficient to protect the sup-

ply, city officials believe.

In a letter to district ranger Dick Kline, mayor Bill Roskelley says, "Since the city has no means of treating turbid water, we must rely on a pure source. The (complete) closure would guarantee the health of city residents, which is foremost in our responsibilities."

Gibson Jack furnishes about 10 per cent of Pocatello's water supply.

Kline said Roskelley's request would be transmitted through appropriate Forest Service channels. An official request from the city to higher F.S. authorities is necessary for measures beyond the partial road closure,

he explained.

The road's last three-quarters of a mile was closed last week to four-wheel-driven vehicles, but Kline acknowledges this will not keep out motorcycles.

The water department recently shut off the Gibson Jack water supply about a week because of excessive turbidity. Although the breakup of several large beaver dams was believed to be the major cause, use of creekside portions of the road and the trail above by motor vehicles also was a factor, Kline said.

Meanwhile, the local chapter of the Off Road Motorcycle Club has offered to help the city in solving the water problem. They deny that "responsible" motorcyclists are to blame.

NEWS BRIEFS...

Should Recreation Be Banned on Watersheds?

Pocatello city councilmen Grant Anderson and Robert Meline are still researching the question of whether any types of recreation should be banned by the U.S. Forest Service from the West Fork of Mink Creek and City Creek watersheds south of town.

Meline and Anderson were appointed by Mayor Les Purce as a committee to study potential effects of human recreational traffic on the city's water supply. About 22 per cent of Pocatello's water comes from the mountainous area in question.

"We'll come up with a recommendation before March 10," Anderson said Tuesday. The Forest Service is supposed to make a recommendation in March, and has requested the city's viewpoint.

"First, we'll make our report to the city council, like any council committee," Anderson said. He couldn't say when that would be.

Anderson and Meline say they are listening to the views of all types of recreational groups, and to biologists and ecologists as well. They viewed the area Saturday as part of a skiing tour sponsored by the City's Outdoor Recreation Program.

"We all believe the area should be available to as many uses as possible," Anderson noted. These include snowmobiling, motorcycling, hiking, and cross-country skiing.

However, he said, "our basic concern is with the city's water supply."

He said the committee is

considering whether all types of recreation, some types or none, should be allowed in the city's watershed. "Even backpackers constitute a potential fire hazard, and fire certainly would be harmful to the water supply," Anderson noted.

City Might Ask for Gibson Jack Trail Closure

By PAUL SMITH
Journal Staff Writer

Unless a majority of Pocatello City Council members change their minds, the council may call for either closing the trail along the city's mountain watershed to motorbikes or closing it to everybody.

The council is scheduled to take a stand tonight on the U.S. Forest Service's "travel plan" for the Gibson Jack and West Fork Mink Creek area southwest of town. Since the Gate

City gets 20 per cent of its water supply from these two creeks rising in the Caribou National Forest, the F.S. has requested municipal concurrence with the F.S. plan to keep the main trail open to trail cycles up Gibson Jack to the summit and to close it to vehicles on the back, West Fork Mink Creek, side.

The council tabled the matter two weeks ago, until councilpersons and staffers could study a lengthy F.S. report of a thorough investigation of the area on which the travel plan is

based. Several council members and municipal staff members now have studied the report.

"If we had our 'druthers,' I think we'd rather close it—but we don't have our 'druthers,'" city manager Charles Moss told a meeting of four councilpersons and 11 city staffers Tuesday afternoon.

"We don't need to endorse it," councilwoman Donna Boe said.

When Moss asked the group if anyone favored the F.S. plan, no one spoke up.

Mayor Les Purce is for "complete closure" of the area. Although, he said he liked to ride cross-country ski, hike and even ride motorbikes on the trail, the mayor noted increasing human traffic in the area with the Gate City's growing population.

Restating his primary interest in protecting the city's watershed, Purce said: "I think total closure is the straightest way to go to get a handle on it right now."

Councilman Robert Meline agreed, observing that "people are the problem in the area," whether in motorbike, snow machine, foot, or horse traffic. He and councilman Grant Anderson constitute a council committee which has paid special attention to the trail question for about a year.

"I'd hate to see it completely shut off," Anderson said. He and Mrs. Boe said they favored keeping the trail open to daytime use by hikers only, with even horses and dogs barred. The daytime limitation would prevent litter by campers.

Even with total closure, the city officials indicated an exception probably could be made for ISU biologists who have research areas in the headwaters of West Fork Mink Creek.

Although the F.S. report concluded its travel plan would not harm the city's watershed,

Tuesday's discussion seemed to crystallize the opinions of two council members and most of the staffers for "total closure."

Planning director Jerry Mason noted the progress of residential development on the west bench and even along the upper end of Gibson Jack Road. In five to ten years, Meline and Mason predicted, the Gibson Jack area will be a "back yard trail" for some residents.

They also heard John Wolfe, director of the city's outdoor program, report that "Human waste is one of the biggest problems for water quality." "I've seen obvious human waste within six feet of the stream," he said.

"One of my biggest worries about the area is the danger of fire," Moss said.

Mason recommended total closure, and water superintendent Gary Thornton added: "I'd have to be for total closure."

Although the trail is used for overnight ski-touring trips by the city outdoor program, recreation superintendent Con Gilmore said: "I'm sure we're all reasonable enough to find other areas." He suggested total closure of the watershed to everyone would be easier to enforce.

Urging that motorbikes be banned, Anderson continued:

they would inevitably cause erosion. "Once erosion gets started," he said, "it takes 25 years to recapture the soil. Our job is to foresee the problem and stop it before it exists."

How could the city prevent the Forest Service from putting its announced travel plan in

effect?

There can be a 30-day appeal period for review of federal administrative decisions, Brent Bennett of the planning department noted.

"Our watershed was established before the Forest Service," under President

Theodore Roosevelt's administration in the early part of the century, Thornton said. This could be one approach to overturning the F.S. decision.

Anderson claimed the F.S. recommendation boils down to a "Political" compromise between hikers and bikers.

11/4/76

Appendix #3

Environmentalist Blasts Caribou Forest Plan

A new off-road vehicle plan just issued by the Caribou National Forest came under fire Friday by the Idaho Environmental Council (IEC).

The plan was criticized for "failure to protect Pocatello's water supply and for its failure to listen to the wishes of Pocatello elected officials" by Ralph Maughan, a local director of the IEC.

Maughan said the council was "very disappointed in the off-road vehicle plan as a whole, but particularly upset by refusal of the forest's Pocatello Ranger District to take measures to protect the city's water supply in Gibson Jack Creek from oil, grease, and sediment pollution caused by trail bike traffic in the creek bottom."

"The continuing insensitivity of Dick Kline, Pocatello District ranger, to the repeated requests of the Pocatello City Council to close the 200-acre watershed to all motorized traffic is almost unprecedented," said Maughan. "The Caribou forest is 500,000 acres in size. The plan calls for complete closure to all vehicles on only about 1,500 acres of the entire forest. I don't see how eliminating trail bikes from another 1,000 acres will hurt those who like motorcycling," Maughan said.

Maughan noted the new Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976 requires the Forest Service to coordinate its management policies with the desires of local governments. "I don't think the Pocatello Ranger District has complied with the letter or the spirit of this law," said Maughan.

"We're glad to see Pocatello will file an administrative appeal of Ranger

Kline's decision," said Maughan. "We hope the city is prepared to go to court to see that its interests are protected, if the district ranger's superiors are resistant to persuasion by means of the up-coming appeal."

Turning from the matter of Pocatello's city watershed, Maughan said the IEC is disappointed in the forest plan as a whole. "All of the Portneuf Range, all of Oxford Mountain near Downey, and almost all of Elkhorn Mountain will be left with no regulations about time of year, means, or place of travel by motor vehicles to protect the soil, timber, range, watershed, or wildlife," said the IEC director.

"Even the weak regulations to prevent uncontrolled cross-country travel by Jeep and motorcycle off of established roads and trails at the summit of Scott Mountain were gutted," he said.

"The entire tone of the Caribou forest's environmental analysis report on their new plan is wrong." He said the forest's philosophy seems to be that "mild restrictions will be made only after severe erosion or wildlife destruction has occurred. The idea that an ounce of protection is worth a pound of cure seems to have never occurred to them," Maughan said.

"The Caribou National Forest was established primarily to protect a damaged watershed from early-century over-grazing," said Maughan. "This federal agency seems to have forgotten why it was created."

Motorcycles Pose Hazard To Creek

Motorcycle tracks (left) cut deep into moist trail abutting Gibson Jack Creek, part of Pocatello's water supply. Deterioration of the trail presents the hazard of seepage of silt, oil, and grease into Gibson Jack, according to the Idaho Environmental Council. Pollution of the city's water supply is predicted if continued use of trail by motorcycles is allowed, the IEC claims. See Story.

2/27/78

Forest Service Dishes Up Tough Regulations For Gibson Jack Area

By PAUL SMITH

Journal Staff Writer

Man's best friend may be his dog, but Fido will have to be left at home by anyone hiking up the Gibson Jack Creek watershed, southwest of Pocatello, if new U.S. Forest Service regulations go through.

This close-to-town mountain area also is no place for overnightamping, according to the Caribou National Forest. Overnight camping and dogs would be prohibited not only around Gibson Jack, but also below the drift fence in the west fork of Mink Creek.

Pocatello draws 20 per cent of its city water supply from the two streams, and the Forest Service has just produced a 100-page draft of a management plan for the 2,200-acre drainage area. This follows a year-and-a-half study by Forest Service specialists, initiation of a cooperative water quality monitoring program with the city, and trail improvement work undertaken in 1977. It also takes into account a 14-point plan developed by hikers, motorbike users, and forest officials.

The management plan, according to Pocatello District Ranger Dick Kline, gives in specific direction to carry out several trail relocation and water protection steps already initiated, while also targeting new short and long-range goals for administering recreation, livestock grazing,

wildlife, and fire fuels management.

The plan may not completely satisfy city officials, who don't want even restricted use of motorbikes in the area. A Pocatello city appeal of the travel plan is pending with the chief U.S. forester in Washington.

The F.S. emphasizes its plan's primary objective is "producing stream water at the point of diversion that is of a quality that can be treated to meet the national and state drinking water standards."

Continued water quality monitoring will be conducted with a memorandum of understanding between F.S. and city, according to the document.

With recreation being the most common human use of the watershed area, the plan, in addition to banning dogs and overnight camping from parts of the area, makes these proposals:

"Trail use will be permitted, provided this use does not deteriorate water quality. If the trails cannot be maintained to acceptable standards, then the area will be closed to trail use. User groups will be provided an opportunity to help with trail maintenance."

"The area will be closed to trail use during the wet seasons, which will vary from year to year."

Snowmobiling is prohibited in West Mink Creek

below City Springs. Trail bikes are permitted only on the Gibson Jack trail to Elk Meadows and to Midnight Creek. Four-wheeled vehicles are not allowed in the watersheds. (These were banned several years ago).

"Other recreation uses will be permitted only so long as water pollution does not occur."

"Special emphasis will be given to 'pack in, pack out' litter control."

Since there are livestock as well as people in the vicinity, grazing in the Midnight-Michaud Cattle Allotment will be modified so livestock will not be permitted in the Gibson Jack watershed and below the drift fence in the west fork of Mink Creek. Necessary fences will be constructed or repaired. Boundary fences between private and forest land in Lower Gibson Jack must be maintained by the private landowners.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping will be allowed, and an inventory of beaver will be maintained annually in cooperation with the Idaho Fish and Game Department. There also will be a beaver population control program. The foresters recognize the importance of beaver in maintaining the quality of the stream water and the viability of the channel. But when beaver occasionally leave the area, their dams deteriorate and cause water turbidity.

Sizes Caribou Forest Management Plan

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'escape clauses'... (which) would allow
a land manager to throw out most of
the wildlife standards and guidelines
on the basis of his decision that it was
not possible, was impractical, etc."*

described as having the highest sediment output whereas it really has the
third lowest..."

IFG says it can only support management "alternatives 6 and 9,"
which would designate the Caribou City and Stump Creek roadless areas as
wilderness (among other areas). The Idaho Fish and Game Commission
has gone on record as supporting those two areas as wilderness.

Concerning recreation, IFG says it doesn't believe the forest can meet
its recreation goals if it projects there will be 10,000 deer and 1,400 elk on
the Caribou National Forest, "because these numbers are about 40 percent
and 45 percent of current levels."

Sherm Boyce, the Caribou National Forest's branch chief for land
management planning said IFG's comments left the forest agency
"concerned" because "we thought we had a relationship going with the
local people" in the department.

He wouldn't comment specifically about many of the questions raised
by IFG because he hasn't had a chance to review the department's
comments closely and because many forest specialists, who will also
review comments on the plan, have just started that work.

However, he did note that IFG is defending only one resource —
wildlife — while the Caribou National Forest must look at all resources.

"We've got to show a little more balance," he said.
Boyce pointed out that IFG did note that the plan "isn't all that bad."

And indeed, that was the case. The department prefaced its remarks with
the following:

"The Idaho Fish and Game Department is very encouraged by, and
pleased with certain parts of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement
and Resource Management Plan. Specifically, we applaud the emphasis on
maintaining diversity of habitats, the inclusion of standards and guidelines,
your recognition of cover, forage, etc., as an important concept in his

game management, the emphasis on road closures to avoid a major
increase in road mileage on CNF and the inclusion of some 'sensitive'
species and salmonids.

"We mention these positive aspects here because the long list of
concerns we express below and our cover letter might be interpreted to
mean that we find no redeeming values in the DEIS and RMP. This is not
true and IDFG does not want to leave that impression."

Boyce also noted that FORPLAN is being used nationally by the USFS
as a computer model for all forest management plans.

When asked about IFG's observation that "alternative 10" would
convert roadless areas on the forest to roaded areas, therefore making
them ineligible for wilderness, Boyce said, "I'm not sure that's true. The
only thing 'alternative 10' does is select less wilderness. But assuming that
less wilderness means we're going to convert roadless areas to roaded
areas — I'm not sure I agree with that."

Boyce said IFG produced the largest and most specific comment to
the plan.

He said the forest received less than 100 comments, many of them
asking for more wilderness. The forest's proposed alternative would
designate about 16,000 acres (Worm Creek) as wilderness.

Many conservationists support 'alternative nine,' which would desig-
nate nine wilderness areas on the Caribou National Forests, totaling
424,000 acres, or about 53 percent of the roadless land on the CNF.

Ralph Maughan, a representative of the Sierra Club, said he felt the
forest was proposing too high a level of livestock grazing, that the plan
downgraded recreation, hunting and fishing, that the plan's economic
analysis was "totally flawed" because its assumptions were wrong and that
a computer model predicting sediment in streams was used incorrectly
because "it was developed for central Idaho and applied uncritically
around here, even though there is different types of rock here."

"You put garbage in, you get garbage out," he said of the forest's
computer models.

Conservationists also urged that 19,000 acres of the West Fork of Milk
Creek be designated wilderness.

"We think this would be a real economic benefit," said Maughan. "Not
many cities have a wilderness area on their doorstep. Also, the fact that it's
so close makes it socially valuable, something the Forest Service has
never been able to comprehend."

The Idaho Trail Machine Association opposes such a designation for
wilderness and has told the Forest Service that, "Our members have spent
many hours performing volunteer maintenance on trails in this area and
trail improvements using state off-road vehicle funds have benefited all
trail users."

Boyce said it will take the Caribou National Forest at least three
months to review and respond to all the comments received on the
management plan.

He said he couldn't say whether there would be substantial changes in
the final draft of the plan, but added, "we've got to respond to it (IFG's
comments). This is so long, I'm not sure how we'll handle it in the final
draft."

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lins' proposal for recreation area status
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oml roadless area in Idaho should be
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New Idaho Wilderness Bill Could be in Offing

Another attempt at drafting an Idaho wilderness bill could be in the works, but Idaho Rep. Richard Stallings says any such attempt must have the backing of Idaho Sen. James McClure.

Stallings, a Democrat, said Friday there may be some attempt to frame an Idaho wilderness bill by a member of the House subcommittee on public lands. It was that committee's chairman, Ohio Democrat John Seiberling, who blocked McClure's proposal for 328,000 acres of additional wilderness last year.

"My A.A. (administrative assistant Gary Catron) will be meeting with the assistants for (Idaho Rep.) Larry Craig and McClure, and that is going to be one of the topics of discussion — do we want a wilderness bill?" said Stallings.

Stallings said he will also have discussions with Idaho Gov. John Evans on the topic, as well as the rest of Idaho's congressional delegation.

enhance the city's reputation, which has often been one of a "smoky, dirty city."

He also says the Forest Service is doing a poor job of managing most of the roadless land in the West Fork area.

"They're doing a good job of managing the West Fork of the Mink Creek Canyon, which is about one-fifth of the West Fork roadless area, but with the rest, they're not doing much of a job," he said.

"We'd like to guarantee they're doing a good job in the rest of the area."

Maughan claims the Forest Service wants to cut down the Mink Creek roadless area to 14,000 acres, and "when that happens, people who are using Crystal Creek, and Clifton Creek and Midnight Creek, they're all going to be forced into the city watershed."

Maughan said when that happens, the city will move to close the whole West Fork area to protect the watershed.

The city, meanwhile, has stated its opposition to wilderness designation for the area, claiming that designation would prohibit any motorized equipment from being used in protecting its watershed. The city gets about 20 percent of its water from the West Fork of the Mink Creek.

Both Maughan and Collins feel confident their viewpoints on the contested roadless areas will eventually win out. Collins said Stallings seemed receptive to the idea of a national recreation area in the Cache National Forest.

However, he will not back a Democratically-produced bill unless McClure approves of it, Stallings said.

"If it's dead in the Senate, it doesn't make a lot of sense to spend my time and energies on a bill in the House," he said.

Ralph Maughan, area representative for the Sierra Club and a strong wilderness advocate, said he expects an Idaho wilderness bill to be developed by House Democrats "within the next month or two."

Craig Geberts of the Idaho Conservation League said Friday he expected either McClure or Idaho Sen. Steve Symmes to develop a wilderness bill, but McClure aide R.D. Palmer said Friday he wasn't aware of such an attempt.

Palmer reiterated McClure's past statements that the senator will allow the Forest Service to develop its own management plan for roadless areas, rather than fight another battle over a wilderness bill.

In addition, he said Rep. John Seiberling, D-Ohio, the chairman of the subcommittee on public lands, was impressed with a recent trail machine association presentation pushing NRA status for the North Lemhi.

"If we can get our legislators thinking along those (NRA) lines, then we can get together with people pushing for wilderness designations and work together for recreation areas," said Collins.

Maughan, meanwhile, says he thinks the Caribou Forest will have to alter its present forest management plan to include more land to be managed as wilderness.

"The Forest plan as a whole is bad, from our point of view, and from the point of view of anglers and hunters," said Maughan. "All you had to do was read the Fish and Game's critique of it. It's overweighted in favor of commodity extraction, especially timber harvest."

Maughan said if the plan is not changed to include part of the West Fork of the Mink Creek area for wilderness, it will no doubt be challenged in court by wilderness advocates.

He believes the Forest Service will oppose wilderness designation for the Mink Creek Area, but that it will eventually take place.

"The neighborhood wilderness concept is foreign to the Forest Service," said Maughan. "They've had a neighborhood wilderness forced down their throats in Missoula, in Salt Lake City, in Tucson and in Colorado."

"They always oppose them, and they always lose."

Jan. 13, 1985

Nov. 1985

Groups Appeal Caribou Plan

By BILL FRANCIS
Journal Staff Writer

The Idaho Natural Resources Legal Foundation has appealed the Caribou National Forest land management plan.

Bill Meiners, chairman of the board of the group, said conservation groups joining in the appeal include the Idaho Environmental Council; the Portneuf Valley Audubon Society; the Idaho Wildlife Foundation; the Sierra Club; the Idaho Conservation League; the National Audubon Society; and Peter Bowler, a former Idahoan who now lives in California.

Caribou National Forest official Sherm Boyce said the forest has not yet received a copy of the appeal, so he couldn't comment specifically. The forest has 30 days to respond.

However, Boyce said, "the strength of the plan is going to respond to a great majority of the points at face value."

Meiners said the appeal was filed Nov. 12. The document establishes nine reasons for the appeal.

The appeal states:

- That Caribou National Forest evaluation of roadless areas don't meet criteria established by the California vs. Block lawsuit concerning roadless areas.

- That the forest's environmental impact statement fails to disclose a mitigation plan for serious threats to the whooping crane, an endangered species.

- That despite federal requirements, the forest's land management document doesn't include an integrated pest management plan.

- That the land management plan calls for even-aged management of timber without establishing justification required by law.

- That the material devoted to economics in the forest's environmental impact statement and land management plan don't meet legal requirements or criteria established in a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture decision on review of administrative decisions. Those criteria were established after the forest plans and environmental impact statements of the San Juan, Grand Mesa and Uncompahgre-Gunnison National Forests.

- That the EIS does not display an adequate range of alternatives.

- That the site-specific controls and standards for oil and gas leasing do not appear in the EIS or the land management plan.

- That the EIS doesn't discuss highly-erodible soils, road-building, logging and other soil-disturbing activities, contrary to federal law.

- That the EIS and the land management plan don't discuss criteria used in allocating roadless areas to wilderness use, nor do they disclose criteria used in selecting the preferred alternative.

Boyce said he thought the forest's roadless area evaluation is strong, noting that it was used as a national sample for other forests to emulate.

"I wish we didn't have to spend the time to go through this process," he said. "It's going to be time-consuming. I feel the plan has been misunderstood by a lot of people."

IDAHO STATE JOURNAL

Page 4 - Section A

POCATELLO,

IDAHO,

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 1975

Signed columns are the opinions of their writers; unsigned editorials are the Journal's views.

Don't Close Cherry Springs

The Forest Service's decision to close the Cherry Springs picnic area along Mink Creek is a good example of the technique of allowing conditions to deteriorate until public usage falls off, then closing the area on grounds it is no longer popular.

THE CHERRY SPRINGS area enjoyed heavy usage until a few years ago, when the Forest Service abandoned the water system because it lacked funds to make repairs at modest cost. But even without water, the campground attracted a good many visitors because it is near Pocatello and is a pleasant spot, with the creek meandering through. The Forest Service says the creek floods in the spring, but it has done nothing recently to improve the channel.

If brush has overgrown some of the trails, it is because the Forest Service has kept portions of the campground closed to the public. Sources also say uncontrolled beavers have felled a number of trees.

The Forest Service says its budget is too lean to maintain all the recreation areas. But what happens when one as popular as Cherry Springs is closed? People drive a few miles

farther up the road and picnic in unsupervised areas where litter and environmental damage result. The spots along the South Fork of Mink Creek below Justice Park are a good example.

In these days of inflation energy conservation efforts and high-priced gasoline, it makes sense to develop more, not fewer, places where families can enjoy low-cost recreation. Justice Park campground, inaccessible until early summer and crowded during the peak season, is not the answer.

IT MUST BE LESS expensive to spend a few thousand dollars putting Cherry Springs back into shape than to develop another recreation area, which will be the alternative. More people are living in Pocatello than ever before, and they are going to head for picnic areas all summer.

Before the Forest Service spends its admittedly scarce funds on maintaining and improving other spots, it should reconsider its decision to close Cherry Springs. A water system and minimum maintenance would bring thousands of visitors back there.

TO ASSESS TRAIL SITE

Group Tours Cherry Springs Nature Area

Several members and friends of a newly organized local environmental education group recently toured the Cherry Springs Nature Area to determine how they could assist in the development of an interpretive nature trail.

The group would serve as volunteers and provide both expertise and labor.

Formerly a picnic area, the 29-acre Cherry Springs Nature Area is located about eight miles south of Pocatello. It is presently used by professors of Idaho State University and others as a nature study

area, but nothing has been done to interpret existing features for use by laymen.

An environmental assessment of the area, completed in 1980 by the Forest Service, determined that the site could best be utilized for nature study, but austere budgets mean that if the site is ever developed, volunteer labor will play a significant part.

The site is rich in historical and flora and fauna features. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the 1930s developed a mile-long campground on the site. It featured

both daytime "picnic" and overnight camping facilities. Five foot-bridges and three auto bridges cross Mink Creek within its boundary.

By today's standards, the site could not be utilized as a campground because of its location within a floodplain. Flooding, coupled with deterioration of the area's culinary water supply and extensive vandalism, resulted in the area being sealed off to vehicle travel in 1975.

The site contains over 30 varieties of trees and shrubs. In addition, 30 mammals have been identified within its border and the Audubon Society has identified 123 varieties of birds which frequent the area at some time during the year.

The environmental education group, headed by Jay Anderson, ISU biology professor, wants to identify noteworthy items contained in the area and in conjunction with the Forest Service, develop numbered stations to identify

features and stimulate thought as to how they interrelate with the other area plant and wildlife features.

Carl Linderman, recreation leader on the Pocatello District and Forest representative of the project, said, "The Cherry Springs site provides an excellent nature study area, but until it's interpreted, it has meaning only to specialists."

The proposed project is only in the planning stages, but site development could begin in the spring of 1984. Many hundreds of hours of volunteer work will be needed, and any local residents who would like to assist should contact Linderman of the Pocatello Ranger District, (208) 238-6808.

Volunteers who participated in the recent tour included Jay Anderson, Shirley Wright, Cathy Littlenecker, Sharon Blender, Paul Grabowski, Charles Trost, Ann Walke, Cheryl Webb, Eric Rude, Kevin Boos, and Elsie Frazier. Forest volunteers included Linderman and Ray Tate.

use one or two birds may have been seen or heard at a new location. Maybe the bird had not been recorded in Idaho, for example, since the Lewis and Clark expeditions.

The greatest number of species ever seen on a count was 331. These birds were recorded by two individuals who did not need to use a car at Manu National Park in Peru. One of these observers had also been with well-known birdwatcher-naturalist Roger Tory Peterson when they recorded 235 species in Texas. They had to cover several hundreds of miles by both airplane and car to get this record for the entire United States in one day. Not only did this number break the 231 record set in California, but brought in \$25,000 for wildlife research by the Audubon Society. Pledges were collected before the big day count was held, and the money pledged was used to study all wildlife, not just birds.

The rules for a bird count are fairly simple. All birds must be conclusively identified by sight or sound. The birds have to be wild and unrestrained. Travel by any means is allowed, but all observers must be in the same vehicle. If the birdwatchers are on foot, they must stay within direct voice contact with each other. This voice contact, however, is limited. No bird information can be sought from those outside your group of watchers.

Idaho remains in the beginning category when big days are considered. Counts have been held since 1979, but over 100 species have been recorded each year. Usually the large number of species have been recorded by out-of-staters. This was true until the 1980 big day, when four observers from the Boise area recorded 126 species in southwest Idaho. In 1982, two Californians recorded 135 species. They covered 321 miles in their car, seven miles on foot and counted for 17 hours.

Earlier this year two other birdwatchers and I decided to break the record. W. Ed Harper, who had organized the 1982 record count, returned this year to help Dr. Chuck Trost and me with our assault on the old record. Harper is a mathematics instructor from Sacramento, California, and Dr. Trost is an associate biologist and ornithologist at Idaho State University.

After working all day in Boise, then driving to Pocatello, I arrived at Chuck's house about 10 p.m. on June 10. Ed had arrived a couple hours before me. We planned to get up very early the next morning, but we concentrated on maps and discussed the best possible routes until midnight.

We overslept. It was the robins that woke us up at 5:30. We skipped breakfast, and Chuck drove us to the West Bench area of Pocatello to hear early morning songsters such as the tiny grasshopper sparrow before heading to Mink Creek and Scout Mountain. To see and hear more than 135 species, we would have to cover many different habitats or vegetative types. We needed marshes, sage-juniper desert, foothills, riverbanks, forests of both evergreen and deciduous trees and subalpine rocks and snow.

Ed had a route drawn out on the map from the previous year's count, but Chuck and I were able to add more areas we were familiar with. We would stick to Ed's basic route and take side trips into new areas

Chuck and I knew. The West bench area was one of the new spots. Mink Creek and Justice Park on Scout Mountain and the trout farm just northwest of Pocatello would eat up the first five hours. With Chuck driving his pickup, we would not waste much time on the highways where birds would not be found.

Our count would take us from the Pocatello area west through Massacre Rocks State Park and American Falls, then around American Falls reservoir to Blackfoot and north to Market Lake Wildlife Management area at Roberts, then through St. Anthony to Ashton. From there, we would take the Mesa Falls loop and come out at Harriman State Park, then head north through the Island Park area to Henry's Lake.

Could we make all these spots in one day and still see lots of wildlife plus set a record for the most birds to be recorded in Idaho for a single day? I felt sure we could if we had good weather and no car problems.

The grasshopper sparrow was one of the first birds we heard on the bench, but it wasn't the only one. There were rufous-sided towhees and green-tailed towhees. The list began to grow. From the bench we headed up into the Mink Creek drainage, just south of Pocatello. The area has a lush growth of chokecherry, maple juniper and sagebrush. There is a scattering of firs on the open slopes. With all this diverse plant life, we added many species to the list. Most of the birds were found in the former Cherry Springs Nature Study Area, once a campground maintained by the Caribou National Forest before it was closed by vandalism and flooding by beaver dams.

Chuck and I had inventoried the area for birds several years ago for the national forest. We found more than 90 species then, and we found all of them again on this count. We found the plain titmouse, yellow-breasted chat, MacGillivray's, yellow and black-throated gray warblers, willow flycatchers, but no gray catbirds — an uncommon bird of the lush cherry growth. We would not find the catbird at all on this count. We were very fortunate in hearing a ruffed grouse give his territorial drumming on a log somewhere up the hill.

Continuing up to Justice Park, we added two of the state's most beautiful songsters — the Swainson's and hermit thrushes. Both of the tiny kinglets (ruby-crowned and golden-crowned) were there. The ruby-crowned is the most vivacious singer despite its tiny size — only four inches long. The golden-crowned is close to 3 1/4 inches long, making it smaller than several of the hummingbirds. Other tiny birds we would add to the list on the way up were red-breasted nuthatches at 4 1/2 inches long and the calliope hummingbird, the smallest hummer in the U.S. at 2 1/4 inches long.

The prize bird on Scout Mountain was the small western flycatcher. Its characteristic whistle ("whit-see") could be heard for more than 200 feet. Since this was the first record of this bird in eastern Idaho, we could not go on sound alone. We had to see the bird. We managed to get a good look from 15 feet away. There was no doubt of its identity.

Later in the morning we would add the larger black-chinned and broad-tailed hummers, the Virginia's



Journal Photo by Bill F

AT YOUR SERVICE — Toni and Bob Coppersmith, volunteer campground hosts at the Justice Park Campground on Scout Mountain, pose with a Caribou National Forest Service

sign telling campers of their presence. The host program is new for the U.S. Forest Service, and the Coppersmiths, retirees from New Mexico, say they like it just fine. See story.

Campground Hosts Enjoy Cool Breezes

By BILL FRANCIS
Journal Staff Writer

Bob and Toni Coppersmith, hosts at the Caribou National Forest's Justice Park Campground on Scout Mountain, sit enjoying a cool summer breeze while Pocatellans swelter in 90-degree heat.

"We love it up here," says Toni.

Bob explains that because the U.S. Forest Service budget has been cut by more than 30 percent in the past three years, the agency needs volunteer help — like them.

"We applied to seven forests, but the Caribou National Forest is very efficient — they answered in about three days, so we took this one."

Bob and Toni are retired, from Las Cruces, N.M., and are volunteering their campground host services seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Bob freely admits he's 59 years old, but adds, "don't ask her how old she is, she'll tell you 39." He's a retired economics professor and retired speechwriter who at one time or another wrote speeches for Adlai Stevenson, Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern. But that's behind him now.

"I don't want any more business. I'm retired," he says. He and Toni are completely happy about their volunteer duties.

"There's a lot of deer and thousands of ground squirrels and birds," says Bob. "It's almost a bird sanctuary. And there's a lot of gold finches. We've never seen one before."

He's enthusiastic about the campground amenities, especially the water.

"The water's about 38-39 degrees, and 99 percent pure. It's the best tasting water..."

How long will they stay?

"We came here on May 20 and will be here through Labor Day," he says. His job? Checking on campers, supplying information about the campground and keeping visitors happy. Taking periodic treks through the area keep him busy, since he walks about five miles a day. Toni goes with him on at least one of those walks (a 1.1 mile loop) each day. Then she heads back to their Airstream trailer where she keeps busy with her crafts and by their 8-year-old grey poodle "Mei-Mei" ("baby-baby" in French).

Bob figures that since he and Toni have been in the area, the "rowdiness" and vandalism has been reduced, but he emphasizes that they don't have any enforcement authority. If it gets noisy, all he needs to do is ask campers to keep it down. "People quiet down nicely," he said.

It's obvious the two like the job, and they intend to be campground hosts every summer if they can get the work. "We'll probably be back here if we're invited," said Bob.

Bob and Toni aren't the only new additions at Justice Park. It also boasts four new restrooms, which look a little like tiny school houses. They're still in the process of being built, but Bob said they'll be tiled and painted white on the inside and will have brown exteriors.

The restrooms will replace ones which were built in the late '30s and early '40s, according to Caribou National Forest Recreation Forester Carl Linderman.

Bannock County's Pathfinder Through Snow

By JEAN H. LINDLEY
Journal Staff Writer

Some would see Pat Whitworth as an intruder, bringing his giant yellow machine into the stillness of the southern Idaho hills. Others, the snowmobilers and the cross-country skiers, see him as a pathfinder — clearing a smooth, winding trail of snow from Inkom to Lava Hot Springs.

Whitworth sees himself as a conservationist and an instrument of the county. He won't argue there are some people who would ban his grooming machine, and all machines, from the snow-covered mountains. But everyone, he believes, has a right to the beauty of these mountains.

"I try to keep these trails the best in the state. Nothing makes me madder than having nobody ride them," the life-long Inkom resident said.

Riding solo, or with Ruth, his wife of 26 years, the grey-haired Whitworth engraves 300 miles of snow trails with Bannock County's \$72,000 diesel-powered snow monster.

Hundreds of snowmobilers and cross-country skiers flock to the Caribou National Forest to use his paths — cutting their own, smaller trails through Whitworth's Douglas fir and aspen wilderness.

The snow groomer, owned by the Bannock County Snowmobilers Association, clears trails throughout the county and, through an agreement, opens paths in other counties throughout southeast Idaho.

For eight winters, the Inkom farmer has climbed aboard his groomer and headed for the mountains of southern Idaho. In those years, he believes he has become an accepted part of the forest.

He tells of the time, two years ago, when he fed two elk all winter. The five-point bull he

named "Wilbur," while the two-pointer "wasn't worth naming."

He says he and Ruth have only been lost once while riding the groomer — the time he forgot the first names of some of the trees.

Whitworth begins his days early, while the moose and elk can still be seen hiding behind the trees and an occasional bobcat scurries through the snow.

He climbs into the unheated cab of the huge machine, pops in a John Conlee cassette and sets off on a tour through the woods that will, at times, take him until after dark to complete. This day, he takes his machine toward Inman Pass outside of Inkom — to show a beginner the ropes.

Even before he starts his day on the groomer, Whitworth has plowed the snow at Pebble Creek Ski Area and hunted coyotes for an hour or so.

"I get up early in the morning because the wild game is still out," he explains. "I've seen 15 moose since I started grooming Dec. 22, a few bobcat and some cougar tracks."

Although Whitworth claims there are no qualifications necessary to drive the groomer, he's been "runnin' dosers" for more than 35 years and handles the groomer's levers and knobs with skill.

During his years as a construction worker, he helped haul the river away from Pocatello and build Malad Pass.

But after he broke his back in a tractor accident, he had to turn to other pursuits to fill his winter months off the farm. He finds driving the groomer a rewarding occupation.

"I got so tired of tearing things down (working construction). This way, I'm creating something," he said.

For the novice, driving Whitworth's huge machine for seven miles through narrow drifted paths was, at first,

unnerving. Memories of the drive lingered for two days — an aching back and sore arms.

Whitworth failed to mention the stamina it takes to drive the machine all day.

Although the Inkom farmer makes only \$5 an hour "playing with the snow," he says he does it because of the people.

Snowmobilers and cross country skiers are, in general, courteous and friendly, although, he admits, "there's the rare dude who wouldn't move over for his own mother."

Snowmobilers and cross country skiers in this area haven't always gotten along, Whitworth notes. In fact, only until recently the two groups were avowed enemies, he added.

They have now combined forces to raise money to keep the local Park 'N Ski areas open. Local snowmobile clubs, Sunset Sports and the Southeast Idaho Nordic Ski Association are sponsoring a \$1-per-ticket raffle to raise funds to keep the areas plowed.

Any money left over, Whitworth notes, will go to his machine.

"It's one of the rare times snowmobilers have helped skiers and skiers helped snowmobilers," he said.

The fact that these two groups have joined together to better their respective sports means more than just an end to tension between skiers and snowmobilers, Whitworth believes. It may also mean helping to save the groomer that makes these sports more enjoyable.

Since the beginning of this winter, the machine has been threatened by low snowmobile license sales and officials were worried the groomer would have to be moved to another county.

But a recent pitch by the county has paid off and more sportsmen are paying \$5 for the licenses. The groomer appears safe, at least for now.

Whitworth is still encouraging county residents to buy their stickers and designate the money for the Bannock County groomer.

And then there are those few who refuse to buy a \$5 trail license.

Whitworth said he's seen snowmobilers on \$4,500 machines leave the trail, crash through the woods and hide behind the trees to avoid being caught without a sticker.

"They'll break their windshield for the sake of a \$5 license," he said.

That license money, Whitworth explains, is the lifeblood of his machine, with 80 percent going toward maintenance of the groomer and 20 percent spent to print the license.

Cross country skiers are also required to purchase a \$5 sticker for the year-long privilege of parking in the county's cleared areas and riding on Whitworth's trails.

Despite minor problems with a few sportsmen, Whitworth maintains a good relationship with most of the people who ride his trails. He says he has more than one reason to stay friendly with them.

"I'm too old to run and I can't fight, so I try to have a good relationship with them," Whitworth explains.

Those friendships have sometimes meant rescuing stranded sportsmen, answering questions, selling licenses and stopping every now and then to visit with users of the trail. One wide spot in particular is designated strictly for conversation.

"Here, they talk about who has the best machine and who can go the fastest, that kind of thing," Whitworth explains, pointing to a heavily traveled clearing in the trail. □



Whitworth at his groomer.

Caribou Forest Plans Three-year Nordic Ski Trail Building Program

Journal
Oct 21

The Caribou National Forest will build several nordic ski trails in the Mink Creek area during the next three years, a forest spokesman says.

Carl Linderman said forest officials want to build between 30 and 40 miles of trails for skiers who are unfamiliar with the Caribou back-country and to minimize winter hazards.

Most trails will be loops of varying distances that will return skiers to their starting points. Linderman said a five-mile trail connecting the Valve House Draw and Blind Springs areas will be ready this winter.

When the trails are finished in 1985, forest officials hope to have them placed on the National Recreation Trails registry, Linderman said.

He said most of the construction work will be done by volunteer groups since the forest was not appropriated any trail construction funds by Congress.

Extent of the trail network will be determined by the number of people who visit the area and whether the forest can induce volunteers to help.

"This depends on good utilization by the public," Linderman said. "We don't want to build something

that the public won't use."

While most of the trail corridors haven't been decided yet, Linderman said he's marked out two loops in addition to the Valve House trail.

He said one trail will lead from the parking lot at Crystal Summit to a canyon a half-mile north of Corral Creek. The six-mile trail will climb back to the summit along a roughly parallel track.

Linderman hopes work can begin this year, with completion set for late 1983.

A second trail will branch off from a point about two miles west of the trailhead of the West Fork of Mink Creek. The trail will ascend an un-named creek to its intersection with the Crystal Summit road.

From there, skiers will have the option of descending to the Crystal Summit parking lot or skiing to Elk Meadows, where they can rejoin the West Fork trail.

Signs and maps will be displayed at all trails, Linderman said. Trail markers will be color-coded to warn skiers about their difficulty, he said.

He said most of the trail network will be developed inside the Pocatello watershed, which is off-limits to motorized vehicles, including snow machines.

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PAGE 2 SECTION B: IDAHO STATE JOURNAL POCATELLO, IDAHO, TUESDAY, MAY 3, 1983

Litter, ORVs Take Toll On Secluded Picnic Spot

Secluded places to have an outside party are plentiful on the Caribou National Forest, but some are being threatened by heavy use and vandalism, an official says.

During a rainstorm last Saturday, several truckloads of partygoers went to a scenic picnic area in Lead Draw, near the road to Scout Mountain south of Pocatello.

The partygoers strewed garbage over several hundred square feet and drove off-road vehicles over fragile, rain-soaked hillsides, causing at least \$2,000 in damage, forest spokesman Carl Linderman said.

While he is upset about the broken bottles, paper and wooden barriers that were torn out of the ground, Linderman said the hardest damage to repair will be the

tire tracks gouged into the hills above tiny Lead Creek.

Off-road vehicle damage sometimes takes up to 10 years to repair, he said.

Already, black soil loosened by the rain has eroded from the tracks cut by the tires. The picnic area is a muddy series of circles made by the trucks as they spun around.

Travel off designated roads is not permitted in Lead Draw, said Linderman. But the small fine hardly covers the damage an off-road vehicle can do in a single afternoon.

Cleaning up and repairing damage caused by vandals is a way of life for forest officials. Last year, 200 Boy Scouts spent a day in Lead Draw picking up litter left in one

afternoon. The forest spends about \$1,000 a year to replace signs which are torn down and destroyed.

Linderman said Lead Draw is usually patrolled by Bannock County sheriff's deputies who can issue citations. Nobody thought a patrol was necessary last weekend because of the heavy rains.

Unless someone identifies who caused the damage, there is little the Forest Service can do except use money from its already strapped budget to begin the repairs, Linderman said. That means other programs will have to suffer.

Linderman says the repairs will only be rudimentary. He said the Pocatello ranger district isn't sure whether it has the five or six days it will take a crew to do a good job.



PARTY'S AFTERMATH — Forest Service spokesman Carl Linderman shows where truckloads of partygoers spent part of last Saturday gouging ruts into the fragile soils in Lead Draw, near the road to Scout Mountain.

Cherry Springs: S.E. Idaho's Unique Nature Area

Environmental Education. What's that? Well, in a nutshell, environmental education is exposing and teaching folks, young and old, the facts about the natural environment.

Specifically, how each single resource depends on other resources for survival.

The Cherry Springs Natural Area has become an extremely popular place for local school teachers to take their classes for nature study programs. During the spring of 1985 over 450 students from local schools visited the Cherry Springs area, located 12 miles southeast of Pocatello. Cherry Springs is managed by the Pocatello Ranger District of the Caribou National Forest.

The Cherry Springs area is a place for all seasons, and recently 75 third-graders from Gate City Elementary School spent a few hours at the site experiencing a few of nature's wonders. The students learned that a little bit of pollution in the stream can have a major

effect on all resources whose existence depends on the stream for life.

That can even mean mankind.

This unique area hosts over 135 different birds as well as 30 species of mammals and too many plant species to even count in this short article.

Residents of the Pocatello area are indeed fortunate to have such a unique area just outside their backdoor.

The vast majority of the people who use the area appreciate what they do have; however, there are those few thoughtless individuals who take it upon themselves to ruin it for the majority. Vandals take their toll by ruining signs, picnic tables, toilet facilities and other functional items in the area.

There are those who may not think about it, but a few vandals do the damage and everyone has to pay. The repairs for vandalized areas take the money that could and should be used for other improvements each year.

The local Audubon Society has

become concerned enough to offer their support, offering a reward for information leading to the conviction of any individual or individuals involved in vandalism.

The Cherry Springs area upgrading has been truly a volunteer effort, with the volunteers putting in countless hours to improve the area for everyone's enjoyment. Yet it seems that in just a few minutes all of the positive effort can be destroyed by a few thoughtless people.

To date, there have been over 1,300 hours of volunteer help developing nature trails, installing informational signs and developing informational brochures for the visitor's enjoyment.

Plans are presently being developed to make the Cherry Springs area accessible for the handicapped. The work is never done and the Pocatello Ranger District is seeking volunteer assistance for surfacing critical sections of the trail and installing handicapped fishing stations along Mink Creek, which flows through the site.

What is it that makes this area so attractive for the citizens of the area?

- It's close, 20 minutes, to the second largest community in Idaho.

- It has a unique riparian habitat that attracts the largest variety of birds found anywhere in the state of Idaho;

- It has year-round accessibility from a plowed highway for vehicles, including school buses;

- The potential for everyone — handicapped individuals, students, nature lovers, young and old alike — to enjoy, and finally,

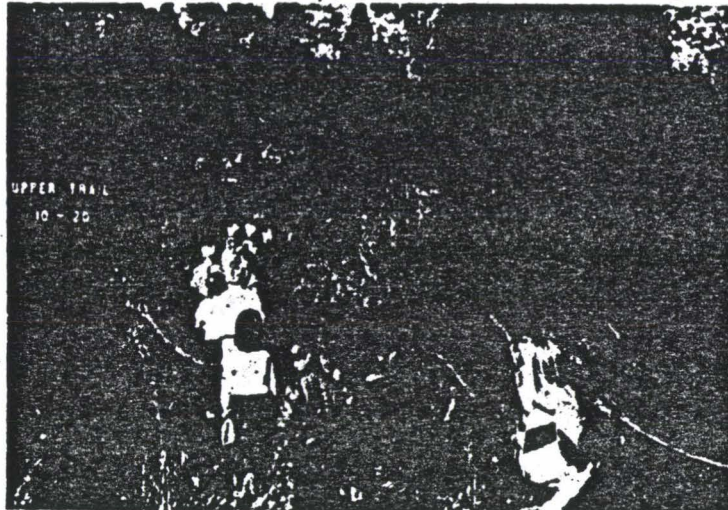
- The commitment that many people from southeast Idaho have already made to this special area.

Will it remain special? We hope so.



Forest Service photo

IRONMENT—The Cherry Springs year around, who learn about the esources depend on each other for



TAKING THE HIGH ROAD—Third grade students from East Gate Elementary School recently visited Cherry Springs Nature Area, which claims the largest collection of bird species in Idaho, as well as countless mammals and plant species.

Forest Service photo

Two Forest Recreation Sites Now Ready

Two forest winter recreation sites developed near Pocatello are now ready for use. One is the newly developed 4.2 mile Porcelain Pot Gulch Nordic Ski Trail, the other a redeveloped and improved Inman Creek snowmobile parking area.

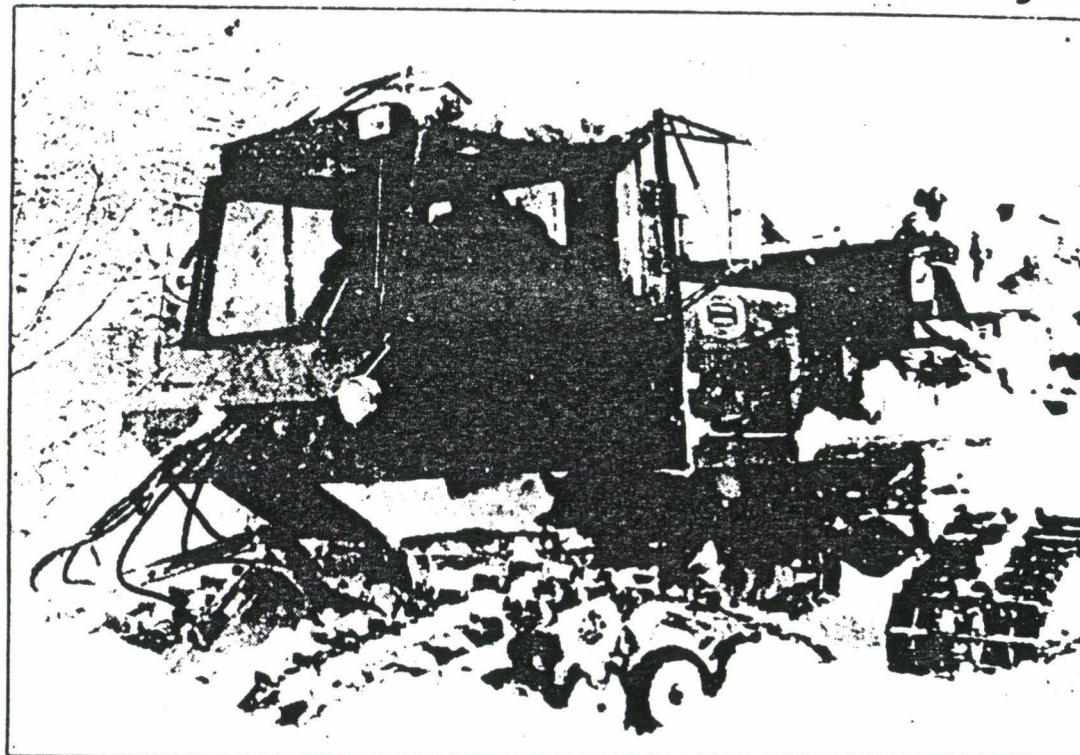
Both projects came as the result of a joint effort between the Forest Service, the private sector, the Youth Conservation Corps and prospective Eagle Scout volunteers. Part of the projects' funding came from Idaho State off-road vehicle funds.

The Porcelain Pot Gulch Nordic Ski Trail is located just off Bannock Highway (sometimes called the Arbon Valley Road). The trail starts just below the Crystal Summit parking area, and it ends at the Porcelain Pot Gulch park 'n ski area. The trail is in the form of the figure "8", so skiers may choose to ski part or the whole trail.

According to Carl Linderman, interdisciplinary forester of the Pocatello District and the person primarily responsible for directing the trail development, "This trail should prove to be very popular with novice and family nordic skiers. It requires only Moderate A skill level, it's close by Pocatello, it is newly signed and because of its location with all the downhill slopes leading to the highway, it would be almost impossible to get lost. And the whole trail can be skied in less than four hours."

Working with the Forest Service in the trail development was the Youth Conservation Corps and eight prospective Eagle Scouts and their crews fulfilling community service projects. Scott's Ski Shop of Pocatello provided ski trail signs without cost to the forest.

The redeveloped and improved



Caribou National Forest photo

IMPROVED TRAIL — Pat Whitworth grooms the Inman Creek snowmobile trail which begins about 5½ miles east of Inkom. A new cross country skiing trail has also been developed. See story.

Inman Creek parking area offers parking space for more than 40 vehicles and trailers and is the starting point for more than 40 miles of groomed snowmobile trails.

From the parking area, snowmobilers can travel to Pebble Basin,

Toponce and related areas. The parking area is located about 5½ miles east of Inkom, up Inman Creek Road.

Forest Ranger Jerry Tower was generous in his praise for those who combined to make the project a reality. Much of the parking lot

funding came from state off-road-vehicle funds.

Maps of the new ski trail and others located in the general Mink Creek area are available at the Pocatello District Office, located on the ground floor of the Pocatello Federal Building.



U.S. Forest Service photo

CHERRY SPRINGS CLEANUP — Volunteers clear brush from an access trail Saturday in the Cherry Springs Nature Area to make it easier for disabled and elderly people to use the area. About 45 people, from Kiwanis and Kiwanis-associated groups, as well as several from the Cooperative Wilderness Handicapped Outdoor Group and the Environmental Association of Southeast Idaho, showed up to work.

Volunteers Spruce Up Nature Area

About 45 people cleared brush and cleaned up litter at the Cherry Springs Nature Area Saturday to improve accessibility for disabled and elderly people.

According to Carl Linderman, recreation forester for the Caribou National Forest, the groups cleared brush from a trail in the area and also cleared other areas to provide six open spaces for fishing along Mink Creek. Wheel stops for wheelchairs and benches for those areas will be built this winter and installed in the spring.

Groups working on the project included local Kiwanis organizations, the Golden K's, Key Clubs and

Circle K Clubs, the Environmental Education Association of Southeast Idaho and the Cooperative Wilderness Handicapped Outdoor Group of Idaho State University.

"Volunteers included pre-school kids to gentlemen in their 80s and elementary school teachers to college professors," Linderman said.

He also said the Kiwanis groups and the C.W. HOGS hope next year to provide access for the blind and visually impaired. They also want to figure out a way to get toilet facilities for the disabled installed in the area.

Cooperative Wilderness Handicapped Outdoor Group, inc.

Pocatello
Ranger District

MAY 02 1985

May 1, 1985

Mr. Carl Linderman
Pocatello Ranger District
Federal Building, Suite 187
Pocatello, ID 83201

Carl,

I have contacted Marilyn Smith and she says her consulting fee will be \$30.00 a hour plus expenses, but she would be pleased to help you with your project nonetheless....! She also intimated that should a consulting fee be out of the question, a bag of peanut M & M's would do. Marilyn's address and phone number are: 316 Mingo Lane, Pocatello, ID 83202, 237-1765.

A suggested alternative to the handicapped access problem that we discussed: provide a disabled parking lot large enough to accommodate three (3) vehicles with wheelchair access paths to both the nature trail and Mink Creek and river trail. The parking lot should be strategically placed so that a minimum of elevation climb is involved for access to both trails taking into account the impact it will have on the Cherry Springs nature area.

I would like to commend you on your energy and concern in making this valuable resource available to the entire community. This area will give disabled people a rare opportunity to be surrounded by some unique bird habitat and fishing access, and afford them some solitude in a beautiful natural area where they can soak up the sun and let their thoughts wander.

I wish you success with this project and reaffirm that any support or help I can give you with the realization of this dream is yours.

My sincere best wishes,

Tom
Tom Whittaker
Coordinator

TW:sb

Responses to Public Comments on Conflicts

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 1 No camping along road to Justice Park. There are keggers and father/son outings. Need restrooms if camping is allowed.

Solution: 1 Recreation areas away from motorized vehicles, radios, and T.V. Also, portable toilets.

Study Response:

This area is a State inholding that the MCRA study highly recommends for exchange to Forest Service. Agree with recommended solution, but this site is State land and there are no resources available to the Forest Service to develop other sites at this time.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 2 (a) Lead Draw - ORV's and parties vs. family picnicking/camping and aesthetics.

(b) Scout Mtn. Campground - Campers/picnickers paying fees vs. non-paying campers/picnickers.

(c) All areas - Motorized bikes/ATV's vs. hikers (Especially ATV's passing hikers on trails not wide enough for ATV use.)

Solution: 2 (a) Restrict Lead Draw to either ORV use or no ORV use with stricter enforcement.

(b) Strict enforcement of campground fee or abolish the fee.

(c) Either restrict ATV use on trails or make trails to accommodate them.

Study Response:

2 (a) MCRA study recommends registration of groups larger than ten people. Study areas with more enforcement but continues to allow ORV use.

2 (b) Congress decides on whether or not picnickers will pay a fee or not. It is recommended that some sort of minimum day use fee system is developed. The greatest expenses and impacts are from day users not campers @ Scout Mountain Campground area with recommendation for more enforcement as resources permit.

2 (c) Study recommends that ATV routes are prescribed on the District along with providing information to the public on these routes.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 3 Camping spots are overrun by cattle.

Solution: 3 Fence areas for picnicking and camping. Cattle gates should be replaced by cattleguards with gates to the side since gates are hard to open and close.

Study Response:

Study agrees with solution in some specified areas as resources (volunteers, etc.) permits.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 4 Crystal Summit - Snowmachines and cross-country skiers.

Solution: 4 Limit snowmachine use to the first and last weekends each month in this area.

Study Response:

Study goes into a detailed recommendation for solving this problem. Considered some sort of rotational use of the area by conflicting recreation users but this was dismissed because of enforcement problems and possibly there is another solution.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 5 Cattle use along streams is in excess and conflicts with camping, fishing, picnicking and general public uses. Especially on East Fork of Mink Creek.

Solution: 5 Limit the areas where cattle can graze.

Study Response:

Study makes recommendations to help solve the cattle recreation use conflicts.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 6 Presence of domestic livestock in camping and picnic areas conflicts with the recreation use of these areas.

Solution: 6 Make fence maintenance and restriction of livestock from designated camping/picnic areas the responsibility of the permittee and enforce it.

Study Response:

Study agrees with the problem and solution, but also the aide of summer home permittees in identifying any problem areas along the fence and in annual setting up of the let down fence.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 7 Open range cattle grazing interferes with cleanliness for camping, picnicking and hikers.

Solution: 7 Propose areas for cattle exclusion. (See attached map.)
NOTE: Areas proposed are not on National Forest Land.

Study Response:

Study makes recommendations to help solve the cattle recreation use conflicts.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 8 In the summer, there are too many cattle at lower elevations on East Fork. One-half mile south of Lead Draw the cattle concentrate in a small meadow along the creek, causing severe damage to vegetation, stream and the stream bank.

Solution: 8 Reduce the number of cattle, and have the Range Rider move the cattle out of this area on a regular basis.

Study Response:

The number of cows is not the problem so much as where the cows are at. Study makes recommendation for this problem.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 9 (a) Cattle grazing vs. hiking, biking and birding.
(The whole drainage.)

(b) Aspen cutting and possible blue bird trail.

Solution: 9 Cows moved to another allotment.

Study Response:

9 (a) - (See Study Responses for #5 and #8.)

9 (b) Study agrees that this may be a concern and recommends that it is looked into. A study may be done through I.S.U. to see if the amount of cutting has any significant affect on blue birds.
There are many reasons why cattle can't just be moved to another allot-

ment including but not limited to the contractual arrangement with the permittee, overgrazing of the overall allotment is not a problem, i.e., you don't throw the baby out with the bath water, and moving the cattle to another allotment would possibly cause the overgrazing of the allotment.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 10 Crystal Summit area between snowmobiles and skiers.

Solution: 10 Close Crystal Summit to snowmobiles.

Study Response:

Study does not agree with solution.
(See Study Response #4.)

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 11 Elk Meadows and Gibson Jack area - Hikers and cross-country vs. snowmobile and trail machine users.

Solution: 11 Separate mechanized from foot, horse and ski travel by putting machines where existing dirt roads can handle them (Kinport Area).

Study Response:

Study makes several recommendations to solve the problem and partially follows the solution.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 12 Elk Meadows - Conflict exists between cross-country skiers and snowmobiles in regards to use of trails in winter time. Conflict between environmentalists and motorcycles, ATV's and 4-wheeler groups.

Solution: 12 Due to the fact the problem only involves Crystal Summit to about three miles in toward Elk Meadows, I would establish two trails. Or, better yet, the two conflicting groups could use one trail if there was some compromising on both sides.

Study Response:

Study agrees with recommendation.
(See Study Response #11.)

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 13 (a) Gibson Jack Creek - Hiking vs. motorcycles.

(b) Crystal Summit - Snowmobiling vs. cross-country skiing.

(c) Justice Park - Too many simultaneous uses.

Solution: 13 (a) Construct an exterior trail bike trail system (as outlined by Rep. Stallings) Leave the interior to hikers and horses. Put the jeep road to Elk Meadows to bed (not just closed) beginning at Crystal Creek.

(b) Construct a separate ski trail at Crystal Summit.

Study Response:

(See Study Responses for #11 and #12.)

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 14 (a) Motorized vehicles vs. self-propelled.

(b) Trail bikes vs hikers.

(c) Snowmachines vs. skiers.

Solution: 14 Develop more non-motorized areas.

Study Response:

Study agrees with solution along with some recommendations to enhance motorized activities.

(See Study Responses for #11 and #12.)

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 15 Motorized and non-motorized use in some areas.

Solution: 15 Eliminate some non-motorized use in conflict areas.

Study Response:

Study recommends relocation of some non-motorized use instead of elimination.
(See Study Responses for #11 and #12.)

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 16 Designated ski trails and dogs.

Solution: 16 Have dogs prohibited from designated ski trails.

Study Response:

Study makes no recommendation to eliminate dogs from nordic ski trails except for Gibson Jack and West Mink. Study recommends better enforcement and information as opportunity permits.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 17 Snowmobiles vs. cross-country skiers.

Solution: 17 Have separate areas (zoned) in particular, the Park 'N' Ski areas.

Study Response:

If this pertains to the parking lots themselves, it will be difficult to do because of their size and shape. If it pertains to the areas they access, see Study Responses for #11 and #12.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 18 Motorized and non-motorized.

Solution: 18 Zoning areas for conflicting uses would minimize effects. Share trails where conflicts exist. For example, allow motorized use on odd days and non-motorized use on even days.

Study Response:

(See Study Responses for #11, #12 and #4.)

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 19 Lead Draw area has a conflict in winter months between motorized vehicles and heavy deer habitat. Also, it is used as a firearms practice range. Kinney Creek is heavily used by motorized vehicles, and both of these areas are becoming heavily overused. In both areas, the land is abused (i.e., keggers, garbage) which is defacing the scenery.

Solution: 19 Restriction of vehicles by positive methods: Bulldozing, rocks and/or trenches to restrict traffic.

Study Response:

Study agrees with both the conflict and solution.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 20 Entire Mink Creek Recreation Area should be off-limits to all forms of motorized vehicles (i.e., snowmobiles and trail bikes). Also, grazing of livestock should be limited.

Solution: 20 Snowmobiles and trail bikes have good use of Arbon Valley, Rapid Creek area, tons of BLM land and lots of land on the east bench of Pocatello.

Study Response:

Study does not agree that this is a consideration on public multiple use lands.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 21 Use of motorized vehicles in small concentrated areas, resulting in congestion, erosion and dramatic noise levels at areas close or adjacent to main thoroughfares.

Solution: 21 Either disperse ORV use or eliminate congested areas through management.

Study Response:

Study follows the proposed solution to some extent. There needs to be more information to determine where additional congested areas are that the study does not respond to.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 22 Motorized vehicles on Gibson Jack Trail conflicts with all other educational and recreational uses.

Solution: 22 No motorized vehicles - especially on Gibson Jack Trail.

Study Response:

Study makes specific recommendations as to mechanized use of Gibson Jack.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 23 (a) Beaver management and city watershed.
(b) Livestock grazing and hunting.
(c) Livestock grazing and mule deer fencing and summer range.
(d) Trail bikes and deer summer range.

Solution: 23 (a) Stabilize beaver populations.
(b) Fence some riparian areas or reduce livestock.
(c) Reduce livestock.
(d) Restrict bike use to established trails.

Study Response:

23 (a) Study makes recommendation with regards to beaver management in the watershed.

23 (b) Follows solution with regards to developing exclosures but does not make any recommendations with regards to reducing cattle numbers.

23 (c) (See Study Response for #10.)

23 (d) Bike use is already restricted to "designated" routes and study makes no recommendations to change that.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 24 Conflict between uses which are dependent on a natural setting such as bird watching and uses which are not such as 4 x 4's.

Solution: 24 Conflict should be resolved in favor of the activity requiring a natural setting.

Study Response:

Study attempts to establish some areas where the "natural setting" would be free from disruption.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 25 Vandalism at Cherry Springs.

Solution: 25 More surveillance by Forest Service personnel and residents within the area. When caught, the culprits should face stiff monetary penalties and jail time.

Study Response:

(Say Amen.)

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 26 Activities listed are used both on Forest and on adjacent private land by trespassers.

Solution: 26 Landowners should sell or trade their land so that this would not be a conflict.

Study Response:

Agree with land exchanges so far as outlined in study.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 27 Potential conflicts if the proposed development of Garden Creek area becomes reality.

Solution: 27 Forest Service, Fish and Game and all user groups remain united in opposing this project.

Study Response:

Study recognizes this as a potential impact. The Forest Service has provided all parties involved, information on the potential impacts as they might relate to the National Forest.

Public's Comment:

Conflict: 28 Conflicts between the different groups of people who use public land.

Solution: 28 All people pay taxes and support public areas, therefore, no definite dictation of any area should be made as to who should use it. Aside from special environmental problems and watershed areas, all public lands should be used by all groups.

Study Response:

The study agrees with this philosophy but attempts to provide opportunities for all users while minimizing conflicts. In doing this, however, this study does not recommend that every acre is appropriately used by every activity at the same time.

APPLICATION OF THE CLEMSON OUTDOOR RECREATION MANAGEMENT
SHORT COURSE TO MCRA STUDY AND BEYOND

The largest contribution that the course made was not so much the specific items found in the paper as it was the overall components or breadth of things that should be considered when undertaking such a project. Everything from what type of information should be considered when developing or interpreting a user survey, to the importance of tourism dollars on the local economy.

The following is a quick review of some of the individual subject matter that contributed to the formation of this paper.

Dick Costley's "Historical Foundation of Forest Service Recreation", Dan William's session on "Life After Costley" and Dick Conovers on "Historical Background to N.F.M.A." provided me the inspiration of going back to look at the historical foundation of the MCRA. I was able to see parallels between the historical development of recreation in the Forest Service and in the MCRA. This review helped me understand why we have the situation in the MCRA today and clarify some future trends and priorities.

I reviewed my notes from Roy Feuchter's session on "Policy Questions and W.O. Perspectives" when I was writing the Present Situation and Trends section. The review brought to light that the perspectives and feelings at that level of organization are very "big picture" and do not necessarily find the light of day at the ground-level.

I reviewed all of the material that Claire Caskey provided on written communication. If you are still awake after suffering through the reading of this paper, you have noticed it didn't help a bit. Sorry about that Claire.

Of all the material that I was given to read and was presented, Rich Schreyer's on "Psychology and Sociology of Recreation" was among the most interesting and helpful. It was beneficial in the understanding of the two surveys done for the MCRA and also in trying to look at possible future trends. There still are too many Utah State graduates in the Intermountain Region.

Memories of our trip down the Chattoga River is all that kept me sane since this paper cut my skiing opportunities to 25% of normal this winter.

A paper provided by Bruce Yandle on the benefits of recreation gave me some ideas when looking at the local user population and trends.

Joe Wallace's session on a "Student's View of the Field Project" scared me to death. As it turned out, I had good reason to be.

When I was writing the Present Situation - Economics section, I remembered our trip to the Pisgah National Forest as how the other half lives.

Bill Farrey's presentation on "What the State Parks in Pennsylvania are Doing to Deal with Tight Budgets", and Gina McLellan's on "Doing More with Less" (I am really starting to hate hearing that phrase.) was helpful in the writing of the Recommendations section.

I did not understand the application of Mike McDonald's presentation on "Stress and Time Management" until March rolled around, and I was still working on this paper.

Danny Ford and his Clemson Tiger Football Team provided me with inspiration when as a part of a four-man, Forest Service Ski Team at the Town Challenge Ski Race, I did a crowd pleasing crash that disqualified me from the slalom race.

Bruce Hronek's session on legal liability was helpful in reviewing the damage that I did when I crashed into the ski area property.

While I did not directly use a lot of material from Bill Gartner on tourism development as it relates to recreation, it was interesting and was, in part, responsible for me coming up with the preferred alternative. I was struck by the importance of recreation on the local community. In Pocatello there are three exclusively outdoor recreation sporting good stores, one large chain sporting good store, two general sporting good stores, three snowmobile dealers, a half-dozen gun shops, three bike shops, three motorcycle/ATV dealers, a fishing equipment store, not to mention the large department stores that deal in some of the same merchandise. I felt it was important to identify this resource for the community since a lot of these businesses could not exist without the National Forest at their back door.

The Forest Service will continue to benefit from me having attended the course at Clemson. As far as my personal career development goes, if my experience after returning from Clemson is any indication, it will be of little benefit.

USE OF THE PROJECT MONEY

Pocatello High School Career Based Education Classes for Help on the Phone Survey	\$100.00
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Postage for the "Mailed Survey"	\$ 28.00
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Typing, Editing and Psychiatric Care	<u>\$382.00</u>
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TOTAL	\$500.00
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A NOTE ON "FIGURES"

Growing up with a father who is an MBA/accountant, an often quoted verse around our house was "figures never lie, liars figure". Thus, I am suspicious of figures. Nevertheless, this document is full of "figures".

Several people of diverse backgrounds have reviewed various portions of this document and expressed their "feelings" about a certain figure or figures. In one example, a snowmobiler when reviewing the telephone survey thought that they were interested in trying cross-country skiing in the future. A professional, non-motorized recreation instructor while discussing the same survey, thought that the survey must have been biased because of the large percentage of people who participate in both motorized and non-motorized recreational activities. Another section that may evoke raised eyebrows, will be the review of the growth of recreational use on the Pocatello Ranger District and the MCRA. An explanation as to how these figures were determined and their weaknesses are included in the text. The accuracy of these figures has been improving annually since 1982. The recent random telephone survey, if anything, helps substantiate these figures. It also brought to light some recreation visitor days of use that may not be accounted for, i.e., snowshoeing, mountain bikes, and 3- & 4-wheel ATV's.

In most cases where someone questioned a figure, it usually was based on a "feeling". All figures contained herein, are based on something more than a "feeling".

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